

THE SEQUEL TO A TRAGEDY



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HENRY C. DIBBLE

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THE SEQUEL TO A TRAGEDY

A Story of the Far West

BY HENRY C. DIBBLE



PHILADELPHIA AND LONDON
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GENERAL

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THE SEQUEL TO A TRAGEDY

CHAPTER I

THE WARDLEIGH CASE



ALLOW me to first introduce myself,—Mark Grafton. I am a lawyer by profession, married, as will appear, and was forty years of age at the time of which I shall write; though that has nothing to do with the story. In fact, I am not one of the characters. My part is simply to set down for you the movement of an interesting and I may say thrilling drama, as it came under my observation. True, I was drawn into it somewhat, helped the play along as it were,—even aided in hastening and directing the crisis and denouement; still, I repeat, I am not one of the actors.

With this explanation let me proceed at once to place the whole affair before you in a straightforward manner.

One evening in the early summer of 1884 I was standing within the great court of the Palace Hotel in San Francisco watching a throng of idle but interested people and listening to a quaint, sweet melody by the Royal Hawaiian Band, which occupied the centre of the paved space. The musicians, mostly half-caste Hawaiians, were in San Francisco to meet the sister of the reigning king of the islands, the Princess Liliuokalani, heiress to the throne, who was returning from an Eastern journey.

As I recall the occasion, which was the beginning of a brief period of intense, dramatic interest to me, I remember that I was impressed by the cosmopolitan appearance of those who were standing and moving about. San Francisco was then, and is now for that matter, provincial enough as compared to the great cities, yet it was in the pathway of travel around the world and was the metropolis of the Pacific West. The Palace Hotel was a noted hostelry, and on that very occasion there were among the thousand and more guests several persons, including the dark princess, who have since then at times occupied somewhat of the world's attention.

As the music paused I fell to listening to a conversation between a couple of acquaintances near by, one of whom was relating something concerning the eccentricities of a certain noble marquis well known to the sporting world. This nobleman had arrived that day from Australia. At that moment he was standing at a little distance in conversation with a tall, handsome, half-breed Hawaiian who belonged to the suite of the princess; her party in passing from the dining-hall had stopped for a few moments at one of the doors leading into the court to listen to the national Hawaiian air which the band had struck up.

Just then there was a slight commotion in the crowd as two noticeable young men entered and approached the marquis. They were followed by a motley crowd of a dozen or more, some of whom were from the street, while others had fallen in from the corridors and court. One of the men with whom I was standing told me that the visitors were two famous American athletes who had come to the hotel to pay their respects to the marquis. The scene amused me and I drew a little nearer.

It amused me, I say, but only for a moment;

then my eyes fell upon the face of one of those who had followed in from the street.

I was startled. Not because the face was the most strikingly sinister I had ever seen, but because I immediately recognized the man as a murderer; or at least as one who had once attempted a deliberate and cowardly murder under my own eyes,—a crime for which he was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for a long term. I remembered, too, that he had the reputation on the Arizona frontier, where I had seen him three years before, of having been more successful in the commission of other bloody crimes. I looked at him again, sharply. He was well inside the crowd and I could only get a glimpse of his face under a dark slouch hat. There could be no mistake; it was Rolla Clanton, known by the sobriquet of "Claw" Clanton because of a peculiar scar or birth-mark on his face.

The Hawaiian music, the marquis and his friends were out of my mind in an instant. The sight of Clanton's face had the curious effect of opening a flood of light upon my memory, and the whole panorama of a never-to-be-forgotten night stretched away before me. I hardly

thought of Clanton again. It did not occur to me at the time that he was probably an escaped convict. I recall that I had a faint impression that he must have been pardoned, and the association of ideas revived a vague recollection that I had heard that he was highly connected, politically, in one of the Southwestern States.

However, I certainly did not give the fellow a second thought, nor did I even look towards him again. Instead I fell into a profound reverie,—a bad habit of mine. I was oblivious to everything about me and, without knowing that I did so, dropped into a vacant seat against the side of the court. Of what was I thinking? Of nothing connected with the brilliant scene before me; of no one, now, except Lloyd Farrington, the most manly man I had ever known, though my acquaintance with him had been very brief. Thinking of him thus I fell to wondering whether I should ever see him again.

Then occurred a curious coincidence; after some time, how long I do not know, I suddenly looked up; a short distance away I saw Lloyd Farrington himself approaching. He had evidently just entered the hotel, and from his glance I was instantly impressed with the idea that he

was coming there to find me. To say that I was surprised hardly expresses the sensation I felt; I was really startled. Involuntarily I turned to see if Clanton was still there, but he had gone. The little marquis was standing farther off talking with an acquaintance. Turning again towards Farrington, I arose as he came forward with a smile of recognition.

He was a strikingly handsome man. Not over seven-and-twenty, he was slightly above the medium height, erect as an Indian, with a well-knit frame. His dark-blue eyes were remarkably bright, deep, and penetrating. His features were clean cut and of the Greek type. His face was clean shaven. Hair brown; complexion fair but sunburnt; a forehead without a line; faultless teeth. He was dressed plainly, but wore a soft black felt hat, which marked him slightly out of the usual line of city men.

He greeted me cordially, with that gentle dignity which always characterized him. I observed the same profoundly sad expression on his face which I remembered so well.

"How fortunate I am in finding you!" said he. "I came in for that purpose."

I replied that I was delighted to see him, and

asked some direct questions as to his arrival in the city.

"I came up from Tucson several days ago," he replied; "and, to come to business at once, I am in a world of trouble in regard to a dear friend. You can help me, I think, and I feel no hesitation in asking you."

He spoke so seriously, and his voice, always very soft, vibrated so sympathetically, that my attention was at once arrested. My thoughts flashed back to what I had known of him,—to the "story of his life" (so he called it), as he had related it to me on the memorable night which had been brought to my recollection so strikingly a few minutes before. I therefore awaited his communication with the deepest interest.

The music had now ceased and the crowd was passing out. We walked towards the front, entered the large reading-room to the right, and found a quiet place.

"I suppose that you do not know," he said, "that I have been near you for several days?"

I looked at him in surprise, and waited further explanation.

"Yes," he continued, "I have been in the United States District Court watching the trial of the Wardleigh case."

I was at that time United States Attorney for the District of California, and had that day concluded a remarkable criminal prosecution in which I had secured the conviction of one Luke Wardleigh, on an indictment for rifling the United States mails, he having been a deputy-postmaster at the town of Melton.

I remarked, by way of answer, that I had not noticed him in court, and began to go over some of the points in the case, being full of the matter, when he interrupted.

"Pardon me, Mr. Grafton," he said, "but I heard your summing up and the judge's charge, not to mention the argument of Mr. Kenton, Wardleigh's attorney. I am quite familiar with the case. My interest now lies only in the prisoner."

I again observed that sympathetic vibration of his voice, and then that a mist had come over the light of his violet eyes.

"Why, Farrington," I exclaimed, impetuously, "what interest can you have in that young man? When I knew you in Arizona you had

the reputation of being the implacable foe of all such gentry."

He appeared surprised and, after quite a pause, during which he seemed to be reflecting, asked,—

"Is it possible that you did not recognize Luke Wardleigh in court?"

It was my time to be surprised, and I too paused. Then in a moment I recollected a curious impression to which I had been subject during the trial. It seemed to me that I had somewhere seen the prisoner before. Without speaking of or intimating this, however, I merely said that I had no recollection of ever having seen Wardleigh until his arrest.

"Ah, well," said Farrington, "I cannot see that it would have made any difference. My object in seeking you this evening was not to speak of his past, but to ask you if it would be possible to have him sentenced to serve whatever term of imprisonment may be imposed in the Alameda County jail, in Oakland. My dear old mother, of whom I once told you, still lives in Berkeley, and we could do something to alleviate the horror of his confinement." He turned his face away from me for a moment and then

proceeded: "I know that since there are no United States' prisons, the Federal judges in pronouncing sentence exercise considerable latitude and discretion in the matter of fixing the place of punishment. I know, too, that it is quite customary for the judges in the United States courts to consult with and even to take suggestions from the United States' attorneys in regard to the disposition of prisoners."

As he said this, disclosing a certain familiarity with the Federal courts and their practice, I remembered that since my brief but dramatic acquaintance with him in Southern Arizona—where he held a responsible position in the employment of Wells, Fargo & Co.—I had seen his name in the blue book among the special agents of the department of justice. I had not connected him with the name at the time, but I now found myself wondering whether he had accepted service in the department for the purpose of returning to the study of law, which he had been compelled to abandon under the most romantic yet tragic circumstances imaginable.

However, these thoughts merely flashed across my mind and did not divert my attention.

I saw, rather from his manner and tone of

voice than from anything he had said, that he was deeply interested in young Wardleigh's case; I felt such a warm regard for him that I experienced the keenest regret at what I was obliged to say.

"I am afraid, Farrington," I replied, "that I cannot aid you in this matter, though I would gladly do so for your sake. Wardleigh was indicted for opening valuable letters; he being a post-office employé, the minimum punishment is one year at hard labor. The judge has no discretion. He must sentence him to serve at least that term in one of the State prisons."

I could see in the dim light of the room that the color had left Farrington's face and that in his eyes there was a look of anguish. He bowed his head in silence for a while, then placing his hand on mine and looking me frankly in the face, he said,—

"Do not think, my dear Mr. Grafton, that I blame you in any way for this terrible calamity that has befallen me."

"Befallen you!" I interrupted. "I do not understand you."

"Yes," he exclaimed, "it is indeed my sorrow; not alone because I owe my life to him, as

you know, but because for other reasons which I need not explain, but which you understand, his welfare, his honor, are dearer to me than my own existence."

I was astonished,—dazed. I could not imagine what he meant by saying I knew that Wardleigh had saved his life. I said as much.

"Pardon me," he said; "I thought I had recalled to your memory that night of marvellous beauty, of stirring adventure, and of wonderful good fortune to me, when we rode together from Tombstone to Benson,—I see that you remember now. Yes, it was he, young Wardleigh, who that night thwarted as desperate a man as ever robbed a stage or a train, and beyond all probability saved my life. Now that you recall the event you will doubtless remember my story,—you will remember whose brother Luke Wardleigh is."

I was speechless and could only incoherently murmur my astonishment. He was deeply affected, but rallied himself and continued,—

"Let me repeat, Mr. Grafton, I have no thought of blaming you in the least. I witnessed the trial, as I have just told you. It was absolutely fair so far as I could see. The

judge was not more severe than the facts as proven seemed to warrant. The jury could not have done other than convict. The only thing that I cannot understand,"—he said this with rapidly rising bitterness that he seemed unable to check,—“the only thing that I cannot understand is that Luke’s attorney could have restrained himself, knowing, as he did, as well as I do, that his client was guiltless.”

“Mr. Farrington,” said I, “I fear that you are carried away by your friendship. I wish to God that your faith in your friend could be sustained by the facts, but a more absolutely complete case was never made out. Of Luke Wardleigh’s guilt there can be no doubt.”

“Excuse me,” said he with firmness and dignity yet with suppressed excitement, “Luke Wardleigh never rifled a letter, never stole so much as a penny in his life.” Then, mastering his emotion with a powerful effort, he continued in a calm tone, “I beg you not to repeat my words, and if possible, forget them. It was a breach of faith on my part to allow myself to say as much. My mouth is closed by a sacred promise.”

He arose, placed his hat upon his head,

grasped my hand warmly, with a look of deep sorrow in his eyes which quite unnerved me, and started to pass out of the room. I was loath to part with him, and so walked silently by his side out into the corridor which ran into the court and extended beyond to Market Street. I intended to accompany him to that entrance, which was some distance away. Just as we passed out of the reading-room, however, and as we were about to cross the court, the great doors leading to the front entrance on New Montgomery Street were thrown open and a considerable mob of excited and enthusiastic men and boys came surging into the court. They were following a noted pugilist then in the city who was coming to pay his respects to the marquis.

So we turned and walked into the corridor and across the court. In the mean time my thoughts had recurred to the face I had seen just before meeting Farrington. The matter was suddenly thrust upon my mind again with a strange rush and force that caused me to look about to see if I could discern Clanton.

“Farrington,” I inquired, taking his arm as we walked down towards the Market Street entrance, “how did it happen that ‘Claw’ Clanton,

who attempted to assassinate you that night, was released from Yuma prison?"

"Why, he has not been released, nor will he be until his term expires," replied Farrington, rather sharply. "What gave you that idea?"

"Yet he has been released," said I, abruptly. "I saw him in this hotel to-night."

Farrington stopped short and looked at me with incredulous surprise. I then told him what I have already related, dwelling upon my impression that Clanton had been pardoned.

"I wanted to get over to Oakland as early as possible to join Luke," said he, quietly and sadly, "but perhaps I had better look into this matter first." He turned back, and while we walked about together he looked over the crowd; Clanton was not to be seen. Then he went to the telephone in the carriage-office adjoining the reading-room and held a long conversation with the police department, as he told me when he came out. While waiting for him—I was in the shadow myself—I fancied I saw a man flit into the alley across New Montgomery Street facing the main entrance in which I was standing, but there was not enough in the circumstance to warrant my mentioning it to Lloyd.

I went to Market Street with Farrington, and as we were about to part I casually remarked that Wardleigh would not be sent to San Quentin prison at once, and that I might wish to see him in regard to the matter concerning which he has spoken to me. I was deeply impressed by what he had said at the conclusion of our interview, but I did not wish to raise false hopes. That Wardleigh was guilty seemed beyond all question, and in that light my duty was plain. Yet the tense tone of Farrington's sad voice was still ringing in my inner consciousness. I seemed to hear his words: "Luke Wardleigh never rifled a letter, never stole so much as a penny in his life."

We parted without speaking another word. Farrington held my hand for a moment while he was waiting for the cable car to come along, and as I looked into his eyes, so wistful, so tender, so true, and so brave withal, my own were dimmed.

He sprang aboard the car without stopping it and stepped inside. I stood where he had left me for a few moments without any purpose. Another car passed towards the ferry, not a half-block behind the one which Farrington had

boarded. A little distance down the street I saw a man step rapidly from the sidewalk and jump on the rear platform in an awkward, stumbling way. The night was foggy and murky, but I was almost certain that it was Clanton.

CHAPTER II

FARRINGTON ON DUTY

How well I remember the events of that night in Arizona three years before, which were so vividly recalled by seeing Rolla Clanton and by meeting Lloyd Farrington again!

Important legal business for Eastern clients had taken me to Tombstone, where I had been for three or four weeks. I was about to go to New York to meet my principals and report; but before starting East it became necessary to visit Tucson, where the United States Land Office was located.

Tombstone, in Southern Arizona not far from the Mexican border, was at that time a typical Western mining camp; though the place had a population of but five thousand to six thousand, it had the assumption of a metropolis. The great mines of the famous camp were in full operation, yielding an output of from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand dollars of silver bullion a day. A thousand men were employed in the mining and milling operations, and the

wages were four dollars every day in the month. As may be imagined, it made lively times. Gamblers, stage-robbers, desperate characters of every sort, were attracted to the place.

The town in the daylight, and from a distance as you came across the mesa from Contention or from the Dragoon Mountains, where old Cochise, the Apache chief, had had his stronghold, or as you wound over the Tombstone Range from the San Pedro Valley, looked like a city in Central Asia. Not a tree in sight; low, flat-roofed adobe buildings, and wooden structures not distinguishable from them in the dust and glare of the burning sunlight; here and there a more pretentious house of the same type. It had not rained in nine months. Not a spear of grass was to be seen; not a green shrub. Everything was gray and brown. The dust lay a half-foot deep on the approaching roads except where the way was rocky. As you drove in and down the principal street the Oriental aspect changed, and you saw a straggling Western town with certain Mexican features. If the sun were high the place appeared almost deserted. A few Mexican women and ragged children were visible on the outskirts; here and

there a mechanic leisurely and lazily toiled at some building work; a few men were around the corrals along the streets; and at the doors of the saloons hung small groups of idlers. The mass of the men were at the mines, which were near by, or asleep, if off duty. The heat was intense but not oppressive. For days in succession the thermometer would range from 100° to 105° F. at mid-day, but the air was exceedingly dry and sunstrokes were unknown.

It was only at night that the streets became picturesque and interesting. At that altitude—five thousand feet—the temperature fell rapidly as the sun declined. Then as the peach-bloom haze began to gather in the west, a beautiful phenomenon that precedes the gorgeous sunsets which are always seen in the rarefied atmosphere of this arid region, the people would gather before their houses and in public places to witness the splendors of the sky and to enjoy the cool of the evening. As the night fell the saloons and gambling-houses, lighted by great swinging lamps, soon filled with a motley crowd. The mass of the men were individually not distinguishable in their brown overalls, gray woollen shirts, and wide-brimmed soft hats, but here

and there was to be seen a man in city dress,—a drummer, a traveller, or a “tenderfoot” not yet fallen into the ways and customs of the place. Scattered among the crowd were to be seen a few men more picturesque and noticeable, wearing buckskin leggings in top-boots, loose jackets variously trimmed, belted, and with sombreros decorated with silver in the Mexican style. These were called, and sometimes called themselves, “Cowboys;” a misnomer, for the name belongs to an honest though rough class of cattle-herders in the more eastern portion of the Western country. These were simply adventurers and desperadoes such as are always found at the front in new territory as it opens to civilization. There was a great gathering of this class at Tombstone. Two tides met here, one rushing to these new mines from California, Nevada, and the extreme Northwest, and another from Colorado, New Mexico, and Western Texas.

There were no arms in sight, and few worn. The city marshal was a brave, determined, unassuming man, who in a firm, quiet way disarmed those who rode armed into town, retaining their Winchesters and revolvers until they

should be ready to ride out. At least this was the order, although it was known that many left their weapons in the corrals with their horses.

I say that I have a most vivid recollection of one particular night; this is principally on account of the stirring adventure of which I was a witness, but partially also because of the beautiful and glorious phenomenon which I then beheld in the heavens. The skies, there, at all times outrival in brilliancy anything to be seen elsewhere in the northern hemisphere.

It was the 11th of June, 1881. The day had been very hot, and when evening fell the relief was most grateful. The sun set in all its brilliant and resplendent glory. Just as it went down in a sea of gorgeous color the full moon arose in a flood of silver light over the low eastern end of the Dragoon Range, where the ruins of the ancient Turquoise mines are seen. I was on a balcony fronting to the north, enjoying the splendor of the scene and building castles perhaps, when I noticed the approach of Lloyd Farrington. He was younger then by three years than when he came to me at the Palace Hotel. His appearance was worthy of more than a passing glance. He wore a fine

Panama hat, a little back on his head, showing his faultless forehead; a jacket of gray stuff gathered in front and buttoned to the throat, above which appeared the collar of a lamb's-wool shirt and a simple soft blue silk tie; a pair of tightly-fitting doeskin breeches and top-boots. About his waist was a belt filled with cartridges. To the belt hung the leathern holsters of two revolvers, which could be seen glistening with silver and ivory. In his left hand he carried, with as much ease as if it were a riding-whip, a very short double-barrelled breach-loading gun; a peculiar weapon with which the messengers and guards on Western coaches arm themselves. Loaded with cartridges of buck-shot it is a deadly weapon in a close encounter. On his left breast there was a small gold badge with the words, in black enamel, "U. S. Dy. Marshal."

After the customary salutations he remarked, "I notice that you are booked at the stage-office for a ride to Benson to-night."

"Yes," I replied, "I am fortunate in having secured a seat with the driver, and anticipate the pleasure of your company, as I understand that you also go to Benson on the stage."

My friend, Colonel Chester, with whom I was stopping, came out just then, greeted Farrington cordially and asked him in. We all took seats on the balcony.

This was not my first meeting with Farrington ; that took place under very peculiar, and I may say interesting, circumstances. Perhaps I cannot do better than to quote a typical account of the incident as it appeared in a local paper. It is necessary to relate the particulars of the event, as it has an important bearing on the development of the story. But before copying the excerpt from the *Tombstone Epitaph*, which was the cheerful name of the enterprising paper to which I am under obligations, let me set down what else I have to say at this time of Farrington.

Colonel Chester, the gentleman in charge of the enterprise whose owners I represented, had known him for some time and was very fond of him. On two or three occasions while I was in Tombstone Farrington had dined with the colonel, and I became well acquainted with him and found him delightful company; a perfect gentleman in his bearing, well-informed, and, withal, a most interesting *raconteur*. In a sim-

ple and charming style, always modestly keeping himself in the background, I heard him tell of many adventures, which he called "interesting incidents," that would have sufficiently filled the lives of far older men. I learned from my friend something of his past. He was then not above four-and-twenty, but for some years he had been noted in California, Nevada, and Arizona as a fearless and absolutely trustworthy man. He was a graduate of the University of California, and had studied law, but for some reason he never came to the bar, having apparently preferred employment in the service of Wells, Fargo & Co.'s Express. He became a special agent of that great corporation, and was intrusted with delicate and dangerous work at various places where the strong boxes of the company were claimed as legitimate prey by the Knights of the Road, who infested every mining section of the Pacific Coast. It had always been a mystery, so the colonel said, that so young a man should so soon have become a terror to evil-doers. He had come to Arizona a year before to protect the company's interests at Tombstone, then the most important mining point on the coast. He held a commission as a deputy mar-

shal merely that he might have authority to make arrests in cases where the United States mails should be delayed or violated. He had supervising charge of the interests of the company in the Territory, and all messengers, guards, and local agents were subject to his control. He made his head-quarters at Tombstone. He knew all the desperate characters in the region—and they knew him. A keen and far-seeing detective, he was able to thwart many of their enterprises by suddenly appearing when and where he was not expected.

Now to the account of my first meeting with Farrington, which occurred four weeks before the night in question. The details were published in several of the newspapers of the Territory at the time. I select from the *Epitaph*, which I preserved. The flaring head-lines are omitted:

“A dastardly effort to rob the Benson Stage on the upward trip between this city and Contention was thwarted yesterday by the courage, presence of mind and extraordinary skill of young Farrington, the popular special agent of Wells, Fargo & Co.’s Express. We are told

that he had an intimation that the attempt would be made, and it would seem that somebody at Tucson must be in collusion with the robbers, for yesterday, of all other days, would have given them a rich haul if they had succeeded.

“Hudson’s Bank sent to its agency here twenty-seven thousand dollars in coin, several days ahead of the usual time of shipment, to meet the pay-rolls of the Grand Central Mine. Farrington took Dave Colgate, one of the oldest and most experienced messengers in the service of the company, and went down to Benson night before last. They came up riding with Cuth Raymond, the driver, as far as Contention, sixteen miles from Benson and eight miles from this city. Farrington, knowing the ways of the Road Agents, did not look for an attack until night. At Contention the heavy iron-bound box containing the coin was taken from the boot and placed in the body of the coach under the forward seat. A light way-box, containing little or nothing, was put in the usual place in the boot. Farrington then gave certain instructions to the driver, and with Colgate took his seat inside. There were four passengers,—three gentlemen

and a lady from Silver City who was coming to join her husband there.

"About four miles out of Contention and just as it became dusky—we understand that the team, six of Sandy Bob's best horses, had been pushed and was ahead of time—Raymond saw three masked men step from behind a heavy clump of mesquite, where, it seems, their horses stood well concealed. He heard the usual command to halt, the click of a Winchester rifle, and of course he pulled up.

"‘Heave out that box,’ came gruffly from one of the robbers.

"‘All right, pard,’ said Cuth, as he tossed the light box to the ground.

"‘Be careful, Cuth Raymond; don’t try tricks on us,’ said one of them, as he hefted the box. ‘This is way-stuff; where is your Tucson box?’

"‘That’s the only box in the boot; if you don’t believe me, get up and see for yourself,’ exclaimed Raymond.

"They took his word, and after consulting a minute ordered him to throw down the mail-pouch, which he did.

"‘Now, who have you inside?’ inquired the leader.

“‘Several, including a lady,’ replied Cuth.

“‘Well, hold your horses steady if you don’t want a cat-hole through your carcass. And you, Bill,’ to one of the gang, ‘open the door and tumble the insiders out; we’ll go through them.’

“The door was opened, and ‘Git out, all but the lady’ indicated what was wanted.

“In the mean while, we understand from General Andrews, one of the strangers, Farrington had told them that it would be simply folly to resist, and advised them to obey. The general had no idea who Farrington was nor what his intentions were. The three gentlemen passengers, who, by the bye, were General T. H. Andrews, of St. Louis, a large stockholder in the Belle Isle Mine of the Turquoise district, Colonel Mark Grafton, a San Francisco lawyer, and Rudolph Lyons, a travelling man from Chicago, descended first and were ordered to throw up their hands, which they did. Colgate wore a large loose duster, which covered his pistols, two of which he had handy. As he stepped out he purposely stumbled and fell forward.

“‘Git up, you lubberly cuss; are you drunk?’ yelled one of the robbers, covering him with his pistol.

“The incident made a diversion, as was intended. At that moment Farrington, who had kept out of view and had slightly opened the door of the opposite side of the stage, slipped out and quicker than we can write the words sprang noiselessly around the coach with a revolver in each hand. But the leader of the band saw and recognized him. ‘Kid Farrington, by God!’ he exclaimed, and tried to throw his gun down on him, but he was too late, for a bullet from one of Lloyd’s pistols pierced his wrist and disabled his arm so that he shot wild.

“At that instant Colgate rose, having drawn his pistols in the confusion. ‘Throw up your hands!’ he commanded, as he got the drop on one of the worthies. It seems that Farrington, expecting three robbers, had taken one of the passengers, Colonel Grafton, into his confidence. The colonel is understood to have seen service during the Rebellion, and his experience and coolness availed him now. As Farrington fired and as Colgate rose from his prostrate position the colonel adroitly drew and covered the third man. With that the capture of the two, other than the leader, was completed.

“The chief, though wounded, sprang towards

the mesquite bush and paid no heed to Farrington, who ordered him to halt, at the peril of his life. Lloyd, however, would not fire; he never takes life if he can help it. Colonel Grafton says that Farrington remarked that with that wound the man would not get out of the territory. In a moment he was in his saddle and off. The two prisoners were handcuffed and brought in; they are now in the county jail. They are entirely unknown to the sheriff and refuse to give their names; they are good for ten years at Yuma. The leader of the band is known to be 'Claw' Clanton, a desperate hand who broke out of Albuquerque jail some two months ago. The three men wore masks, as already mentioned, but as the leader was mounting his horse a limb of the mesquite brush caught the black perforated rag over his face and tore it off. All the passengers, as well as Farrington and Colgate, distinctly saw the blood-red birth-scar on Clanton's face, which gives him the name by which he is called. The fellow's true name is Rolla Clanton. He is widely known and is said to have been well connected in Texas or Arkansas.

"A few more captures of this kind will make the roads of Arizona as safe as those of Ohio."

CHAPTER III

THE NIGHT RIDE

WHEN I remarked to Farrington that I expected the pleasure of his company on the ride down to Benson, I observed a shadow of anxiety flit across his face.

"Is it necessary that you should go down to-night?" he inquired. "Pardon my officiousness, but I find that all of the seats in the coach are taken by members of a theatrical company, and there are reasons why it may be imprudent for any one to ride with the driver on this trip."

Now, I knew perfectly well to what he referred, but I was a little piqued and chose not to seem to understand. I had heard that it was whispered around town that Rolla Clanton, who was still at large, was on the road, and that he and his party had sworn to kill Farrington before ever "holding up" another stage or robbing another "tenderfoot." It was known, somehow, that Farrington was going to Tucson that night.

I had come to admire Farrington so much that these threats against his life aroused my indignation. I say I was a little piqued. I felt that he ought not to suppose that I would refuse to ride with him because there might be danger. I merely said that my engagement in the land-office in Tucson the next day made it imperatively necessary that I should go by the stage that night. I think now that he understood me; at any rate, he made no further objections.

We sat without talking for some time. Ah Ting, the colonel's boy, brought us iced drinks; silently we enjoyed the cool breeze and the beauties of the night. The full moon had risen high enough to light with unexampled splendor so much of the world as lay before us. Across the desolate mesa to the north, twelve miles away, the rugged Dragoon Range stood out so clear and distinct that the jagged rocks and dark chasms did not seem a mile distant. The light was indeed so bright and the atmosphere so transparent that it was quite easy to read fine print.

"We will have a dark ride to-night, part of our way," remarked Farrington.

I looked up quickly. I was not surprised, but

annoyed, and probably did not conceal the fact. I thought he spoke metaphorically, having reference to some anticipated trouble, and still wished to dissuade me from going down. The colonel laughed without knowing why. Incongruous expressions often have that effect. Farrington smiled.

“Where is your almanac?” he asked. “At midnight the moon will be totally eclipsed.”

“So it will,” I exclaimed. “I had entirely forgotten the date, though I had looked forward to seeing the eclipse in this splendid unclouded sky. That settles the question of sleep for me. I had intended to lie down until stage-time, but I now banish Morpheus.”

At that moment Farrington caught sight of some one who had come down the street to the gate, apparently looking for him. Excusing himself with the remark that he would see me on the stage, he joined the young man, whose frank, handsome face I caught sight of and whom I recognized as the local agent of Wells, Fargo & Co. They walked up the street arm in arm engaged in earnest conversation.

At twelve o'clock I was at the stage-office on Allen Street, and without delay I took my

seat above the driver. The stage was a handsome, strongly built Concord coach swung on massive leathern springs, seating twelve to sixteen persons inside and three or four with the driver,—one on his left and two or three above and behind him. I found that I had the upper seat myself. Six handsome prancing bays and Cuth Raymond at the whip. The company of travelling players and three or four other passengers were inside. Raymond sang out, "All set!" Farrington had not taken his place. I saw him a short distance away talking with his young friend, who had on a close-fitting ulster and a gun in his hand similar to Farrington's. I caught the words: "I absolutely forbid it."

"Very well," said the younger man, "I have never disobeyed you, but for God's sake——" I could not catch the rest. "All set!" cried Raymond again, and Farrington sprang to the seat on the left of the driver. He wore no overcoat, though a heavy ulster lay at hand. The night was already chilly and I was comfortably wrapped in mine. With a merry crack of the whip the team moved off at a rattling trot.

Turning around to me, Farrington said, as if to apologize for having delayed the start,—

"My young friend insisted on going down with us. He is subject to my orders. I refused."

"Pardon me," I said, "and do not answer my question if it is improper: Why do you go down? I understand that you have regular messengers under you to do this unpleasant work."

"I go down," said he, laughing, "so that I can come up. My duty requires me to accompany the stage from Benson to Tombstone tomorrow. I assure you that if I could do so without making this trip I would, but I know of no way to accomplish that feat. By the bye, Raymond," said he, changing the subject, "what did Sandy Bob say when you told him to have the lamps lit?"

"He laughed at me," replied the driver, "and 'lowed that the light would make the road dark in such moonshine as we would have; but he laughed out of the other side of his mouth when I told him that you said that the moon was goin' out calling for a couple of hours and would want to be excused. So he had the lamps lit; they are doing good service right now," he exclaimed, as he swung the wheel horses to avoid

an ugly granite boulder which the lamps disclosed in the darkness.

The moon was now in total eclipse. Bereft entirely of its reflected light it hung high in the heavens, still seen by a refracted light, but only as a dull brownish-red disk.

I had kept the promise made to myself, and sat up to watch the phenomenon. Right well was I repaid. About an hour and a half before midnight the shadow of the earth touched and gradually crept over the moon's face. The effect was weird, as such manifestations of the phenomena of nature ever are, but in that transparent atmosphere it heightened and exalted the glory of the heavens. The familiar constellations shone with unexampled brightness, but thousands of strange stars came into view, while the Milky-Way glistened and scintillated with a phosphorescent light.

During all that glorious night there was not a speck of cloud nor the least haze to be seen. The atmosphere was as transparent as crystal. From the vantage of my seat on the coach, as I gazed around in every direction, there appeared to be no horizon. The eye seemed to reach the limit of the earth's surface; to look out into

illimitable space. Above and beyond it all there stretched away an unobstructed and immeasurable cerulean expanse.

Raymond and the horses were now picking their way and the lamps were indeed needed. We had reached a curious upheaval of granite some three miles on the way, where reft boulders and obelisks more or less symmetrical stood upright; in a dark night they looked like vast gravestones.

At this point there were two roads; the one which we were following winding in a sinuous way through the bed of rocks, the other making a *détour* of a half-furlong or so and passing by a well, near which stood two gnarled and stunted oaks whose ugly lines we could dimly see against the sky.

"Hello, driver!" the voice came from one of the inside passengers, who had stuck his head out of an open window; "whose cemetery is this?"

"I don't see no name over the gate," replied Raymond, "but it looks like the devil's graveyard, and if nobody don't object, I'll so name it."

"Good!" shouted the other; "we'll christen



it now." We heard the pop of a cork and a merry peal of laughter from all the party inside.

Then some one began in a funereal tone, suggested doubtless by the surroundings, "Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest; of most excellent fancy——" but he was immediately requested to "cheese it" by one of the ladies of the troupe, who began to sing "Mollie Darling," then in the height of its terrible rage. She was soon interrupted by the jolly laugh of the whole party at some sally which we did not catch.

A moment before, over on the other road, we who were on top had heard the steady and regular clatter of a galloping horse. Farrington and I were intently peering into the gloom, and just at the well, where the two old trees stood, we were able to make out the dim outline of a man on horseback riding towards Benson. Suddenly we faintly heard the single word, "Halt!" a moment later we saw one, two, three flashes and heard as many sharp reports, two of which came from the well and one from the mounted man, who rode on; and we just caught the sound of a merry, defiant laugh. That sound startled Farrington as the shooting

had not. I heard him exclaim in a low voice, "My God! what can this mean?"

Our interesting inside passengers had suddenly become very quiet. All that we could now hear from them was a low general conversation, which came up to us in an unworded tone of anxious fear.

CHAPTER IV

A CLOSE SHOT

WE were soon out upon the broad mesa, spinning along. A gentle night breeze in our faces carried the dense cloud of dust behind us and we had an unobstructed view. At that hour no sound could be heard except the occasional sharp bark of a coyote and the far-away rumbling of the stamp-mills at Contention. There was not a tree nor shrub in sight large enough to hide a man.

Just as we left the granite bed a bright crescent of light appeared on the rim of the darkened disk of the moon. It steadily and rapidly grew. Soon the shadow of the earth fled; the whole face of the desolate but picturesque landscape became bathed in a flood of silver light. The strange stars paled, but the familiar constellations shone with unabated brightness. Just then appeared over the eastern horizon, where it had been shut from view by one of the abrupt ranges of mountains around the line of which we had swung, a literally new astronomical splendor,—

a comet which for months thereafter attracted the curious gaze of the world. It is known to astronomers as the "Third Comet of 1881," and there is no record of its having been discovered before June 14, when it appears to have been observed in Australia and the United States. Yet, on that night of the 11th, or rather the morning of the 12th of June, we saw it in the heavens, its nucleus shining like a vast electric light, its narrow fan-tail stretching through several degrees. It was an uncanny sight, thus coming unheralded. I confess that I felt a certain superstitious dread and anxiety.

The high table-land—mesa—over which we were passing at a lively gait was cut at short intervals by deep, dry gulches,—aroyas,—and in passing down and up the grades in crossing them Farrington kept so keen a lookout that I felt certain he expected an attack. I was getting nervous, but his calm bearing shamed and at the same time assured me. Nothing was said of what was doubtless uppermost in both our minds; we talked of the unexampled beauties of the night and of the strange heavenly visitor far there in the east.

At fifteen minutes past two we were due at

Contention. We could now distinctly hear the never-ceasing drop, drop, drop, drop, of the sixty stamps of the Contention and Head Centre mills. The mesa ran to a precipitous bluff, down which the quartz road wound. We reached the brow of the cliff; the little hamlet lay below, shrouded in the shadow of the smoke from the tall stacks of the mills. Far away to the south the narrow valley of the San Pedro stretched and the stream glistened like a silver thread. Facing us, the white, precipitous, jagged and barren peaks of the Whetstone Range, half a score of miles away, rose in the illuminated night distinct and clear.

Contention, eight miles from Tombstone, was at that time the nearest point at which water could be obtained for milling operations. All of the ore from the mines at Tombstone was hauled in great quartz wagons drawn by from sixteen to twenty-four mules to these mills where the reduction took place.

In ten minutes we had descended the winding road, crossed the bridge over the narrow river, driven down the single, straggling street, and had drawn up at the stage-office, a one-story frame building which was of the character of all

the houses in the place. Opposite stood the corral, surrounded by a high fence, which on one side, a little beyond us, ran back from the street and served as the apex of the slanting top of a long shed.

I was about to climb down to stretch my limbs; the driver had already jumped off, and the corral-men had instantly begun to unhitch the horses, for we were to take a new team. Farrington, too, had risen to get down. He held his short gun in his left hand. He had thrown off his overcoat, which he had drawn over his shoulders. As he stood there in the bright light of the great white orb, with the pose of an Apollo, I could not but admire his manly beauty. The inside passengers were also getting out for a rest. They seemed to have recovered their spirits and were laughing and bantering each other cheerfully. There was therefore considerable confusion around the coach and in front of the office. Suddenly everybody was startled by hearing some one exclaim,—

“Coward and assassin!”

The words rang out in a clear musical tone above the confused noises and sent a thrill through me; they were instantly followed by

two sharp reports from opposite sides of the street. A whistling rifle-shot passed between Farrington's head and mine and struck the tin roof of the stage-office with a metallic thud. The other shot, apparently from a revolver, came from the open window of Wells, Fargo & Co.'s building, which stood ahead of the stage-office opposite the leaders of the team and just across from the wall and covered shed of the corral. Evidently this pistol-shot had diverted the aim of the assassin and saved Farrington's life. Then, in the midst of the instant wild confusion and above the noise, was heard a fierce volley of vulgar oaths and the rapid retreat of a horseman around the corral out of sight. Farrington had thrown his gun to his shoulder, but took it down again with a bitter laugh.

"My young friend called the scoundrel by his proper name," he exclaimed; "I must see what else he knows about him."

He sprang lightly to the ground and met the youth whom I had seen three times since sundown. They grasped hands warmly and then withdrew into the express-office.

When the shots were fired I turned quickly to see if I could catch sight of the villain. He

was then not two hundred feet away; and as he dashed off, though he skirted the corral and tried to keep under the fence, I could see him quite distinctly; in the brilliant light I even caught sight of his face. It was that of the chief robber whom I had encountered on my first trip into Tombstone. I recognized him by the red mark on his sinister face. However, it was only for an instant. In a moment he had crossed the stream and was riding up the quartz road which he had descended. He pushed his horse to the utmost. In the excitement around the stage-office there was some talk of pursuit, but the proposition was soon abandoned.

CHAPTER V

THE ROMANCE OF A TRAGEDY

TWENTY minutes later,—double the usual delay,—with six fresh horses, we were on our way again. Farrington took the upper seat with me and seemed communicative. He told me briefly the particulars of his young friend's adventure, and his most opportune presence and interference at Contention.

Rolla Clanton's threats had been common talk, yet he himself had not been seen in Tombstone since the attempted robbery of the stage, where he had been wounded. Members of his gang were in town, however, and as they were drinking, they boasted loudly. When the stage pulled out, during the deepest shadow of the eclipse, three of them were seen by Farrington's friend closely watching the start. He approached them noiselessly as they stood around the corner, and after a while heard one of them say in a low tone,—

“Well, his goose is cooked: Clanton will be at Contention, and then this d——d eclipse will

be over; it will be light enough, and Roll—his arm is nearly well—never missed a shot.”

Slipping away without being seen, the young fellow found the telegraph operator and tried to get Contention, but failed, as the office there was closed. He then went to the stable, obtained his horse, and rode down, as we have seen. He was unable to account for the episode at the well near the granite bed, though he had a bullet-hole through his coat to show for it. However, during the trials that followed it came out that the men who fired upon him were two of Clanton's party who had gone down to meet the latter and had stopped to water their animals. Seeing a horseman riding so fast, they divined that it was some one intending to interfere with the plans of their chief, and they attempted to intercept him.

Arriving at Contention, he discovered that Clanton had not been seen, and so watched from the window of the express-office for him. He was rewarded by seeing the outlaw ride stealthily in from Benson way, just as the stage arrived, and ensconce himself behind the high wall of the corral. The rest we know. Farrington further told me that he and his friend got the

wires to Tombstone and sent a report to the sheriff. He predicted that that officer would be on the road within an hour and would capture Clanton before morning. I may say here that it so came out. The cowardly assassin was taken with a fresh bullet wound in his right shoulder, convicted, and sentenced to fourteen years' imprisonment at hard labor. The two members of his gang captured by Farrington and Colgate were also convicted, the others escaped.

In speaking of his young friend Lloyd Farrington's voice vibrated with the tenderest emotion.

"You seem to be very fond of him," I remarked.

"Yes," he answered, gently; "he is dearer to me than I can tell." He remained silent for a time, and then said, "Would you like to hear the story of my life? I am inclined to-night to tell it to you. We are, comparatively, strangers, yet I feel as if I had known you for a long time."

I said that he was too young to talk of the story of his life; that his life was really before him.

“Ah, no,” he replied in a sad tone, “my life is over.”

Then I tried to say that I had learned to admire and esteem him; I was awkward, but I am sure that he knew that I was sincere.

“Perhaps I am a little romantic to-night,” he said, “but is it surprising?” and he looked at the splendors in the heavens.

It was then about half-past three o'clock. The moon had descended in the west and was within an hour of setting. Its light had paled a little, leaving the constellations in their glory. The comet had swept over a small arc and was just disappearing in the east. Three brilliant, resplendent planets—Saturn, Jupiter, and Venus—had arisen as morning stars, and were grouped within a few degrees of each other,—an unusual and sublimely beautiful sight. Saturn and Jupiter, scintillating with joyous rapture and burning with effusive devotion and admiration, were attendant upon Venus, Mistress of Emotion and Queen of Love. The other planets were brilliantly beautiful; Venus was glorious beyond expression. Her light literally burned in the sky,—a pure, colorless, soul-penetrating flame. The rest of the heavens paled; the Milky-Way

was but a suggestion of light; the moon was forgotten,—only Venus and her attendants shone in the east.

After gazing fixedly for a while at this glorious sight, Farrington proceeded in a low voice,—

“I was born in New York; when I was twelve years of age my father, who was a man of great learning and an experienced educator, removed to California, to accept a professorship in the University at Berkeley. By his assistance, at sixteen I was able to enter the University. A year later he died, leaving a sufficient amount to support my mother and myself until I should be able to provide. At nineteen I graduated. It was my mother’s desire, as it had been my father’s ambition, that I should study law. I accordingly continued as a student in the Hastings College of Law, one of the departments of the University, and also entered the office of my uncle, Judge Tremwick, in San Francisco. He is my mother’s brother, and lived near us in Berkeley.

“Ah! those were happy days, and I was contented, although I was no milksop. My mother and I were companions, but I found opportunity to follow my natural bent for out-door sport.

I was fond of hunting and shooting, and became very proficient in the use of arms. I also delighted in boating and yachting. So our lives ran on for two years, and I was progressing fairly. Another term and I would get my degree, which would entitle me to come to the bar.

"Then I met Ruth, and the world was no longer what it had been.

"She was three years younger than I, but mature and already a beautiful woman. Her father was a clergyman who had occupied a pulpit in the town of Melton for some years, but who had recently been called to Berkeley. He was a most refined, cultivated gentleman, and a scholar of rare attainments. In the prime of life, handsome and eloquent, he was greatly admired and beloved; but by no one so much as by Ruth. He was her hero. Her mother was a charming woman, and the three were constant companions. There was a younger daughter who, though but sixteen, had recently married in Melton. They did not often speak of her. There was also the twin brother of this sister, a frank and manly lad, attending the University, and well advanced in his studies, of whom all were proud."

There was a pause, awkward to me because I felt that some comment on his narrative might be expected, and no words came readily to my lips. But presently I saw that my companion was not waiting upon me, but that he was in deep and distant meditation.

“Was it the effect of some evil planetary conjunction that determined my fate?” presently resumed Farrington, gazing intently for a moment upon Venus, now risen higher and shining—no, burning—with still greater splendor. “I know not,” he continued, “but certain it is that I loved her at once with my whole soul. I will not attempt to describe her. It is beyond my power. Her intellectual gifts and moral nature were in harmony with her striking beauty and grace. Both her father and mother, as well as Ruth, had become warmly attached to my mother, for she was and is so gentle, so pure, and so noble that she is worthy the affection and admiration of angels.

“It was my vacation, and I was able to be with Ruth. How can I speak of those days! I need not do so. Your own heart and imagination will supply the picture that I carry in my mind. We wandered along the foot-hills to-

gether. We read aloud to each other. We played, she with rare skill and genius on the piano, I indifferently on the flute. Often we stood and silently watched the sun set over the waters of the Golden Gate, towards which our cottage faced,—a glorious sight of which we never tired. No words of love had passed between us; nor was it necessary. I loved her, and she knew it. She loved me, and I knew it. I was too young to think of marriage,—time enough for that. So the sweet midsummer days passed and I went back to my work and studies in the city. Still, I was able to see much of her. She was always waiting for me when I returned home.

“Weeks passed thus and there were no clouds. My mother was very happy. Ruth became to her the daughter whom she had never borne but had always missed. Ruth worshipped my mother as an ideal being. They talked of me, —planned for my future. Ruth’s brother was to be my junior partner.

“One day I arranged, as much for Ruth’s pleasure as for my own, a yachting trip. A holiday came and I invited Ruth and her father, mother, and brother to sail with me to Mare

Island. We started quite early, going aboard at Oakland Pier, and expected to return by sunset.

“The day was one of delight. I like to think of it up to the hour of the tragedy, for it was the last happy day of my life. How beautiful, how gentle and loving, yet how vivacious and merry, she was! How tender and devoted to her father, mother, and brother!

“Only once that day, or indeed at any time, did I speak of my passion. On our way back Ruth stood alone beside me at the helm. She affected to help me. Our hands touched. I was thrilled. She looked into my eyes with infinite tenderness, and I said in a low tone, ‘Ruth, do you know that I love you?’ With a soft blush she answered, ‘Why, of course, dear; it was not necessary to tell me.’

“At that moment the sailing-master came aft and I noticed an anxious look on his face. ‘There is a heavy black fog coming in,’ he said, ‘and I fear that the wind is dying out.’

“I looked, and saw a dense bank, which had swept in through the Golden Gate, rolling up past Alcatraz. We had passed San Pablo Bay. The wind was with us, but began to shift, and

we had to tack out from the shore. In a short time we were enveloped in an impenetrable mist; the sun, which was still an hour high, was so obscured that it became almost dark. The wind fell, and there we lay unable to see the shore. Everybody was silent. I knew that we were in peril, and at thought of Ruth my heart beat until I could hear it. The fog thickened and the sail hung wet and limp; we were drifting with the tide, which was running out. It grew darker. Suddenly the man at the bow gave a sharp cry.

“ ‘ Steamer ahoy! Port your helm!’ ”

“ It was too late. In a moment the prow of the vessel crashed into our little sloop, cutting it half through and bearing it down until the deck was beneath the water.

“ It was soon all over. There were two frightened cries, and I heard a solemn voice say, ‘ God save us if it is His will.’ I saw Ruth’s brother spring towards his mother, and then I was under the water. It was only for an instant. As I rose I saw Ruth’s face near me. She had fainted and was sinking. I grasped her and held her above the water. The steamer reversed her engines, a boat was lowered

and we were picked up. Ruth's brother was swimming around distractedly. They dragged him aboard. We three alone were saved. The steamer succeeded in landing, and Ruth was borne to my mother's house. She lay all the night long with her eyes wide open. She spoke not a word, nor did she shed a tear.

"The next day they found the bodies of her father and mother and brought them home. When she heard the sorrowful expressions of the people in the street she arose, despite the efforts of my mother to detain her, and in her bare feet and white night-robe ran out and through the crowd to the gate through which they were carrying the body of her father. She saw him. Throwing her arms up, she burst into a wild, vacant laugh. I ran to her. The moment she perceived me her face showed fear, and she made a motion to repulse me, exclaiming,—

"‘So, Lloyd Farrington, you have at length wrought your fiendish work. I knew that you would. I saw murder written on your face the first time that we met.’

"I tried to approach her, but they led me away. I remember nothing that occurred for days. I was very ill. But my strong constitu-

tion carried me through. When I recovered I recalled everything with vivid clearness. I asked for Ruth.

“‘For her sake, my son,’ said my mother, ‘you must not see her now. She is well, except that she seems afflicted with a strange delusion in regard to yourself. The physician thinks that she might become violent if she should see you.’ I turned my face to the wall and found relief in tears. I was physically weak.

“The rest of my story can be briefly told.

“I soon recovered my strength. Ruth’s sister had come down from Melton to attend the funeral of her parents, and she remained. Ruth loved her in a passive way, but for my mother she had developed an absorbing, passionate affection, scarcely less, however, than she bore for her brother. She seemed to be perfectly sane except in regard to me. With all gentleness and tenderness she would condole with my mother for the loss of her son. She became partially reconciled to her own terrible affliction, but her friend’s son had become a murderer,—a soulless, irreclaimable criminal.

“Nevertheless, I determined to see her, and

finally my mother and her sister consented. I was allowed to be with her alone. She did not become violent, but treated me with bitter hatred and scorn.

“‘I suppose that since you are here,’ she exclaimed, ‘the law cannot reach you; and for the sake of your mother, who is an angel of goodness, I will not denounce you. Still, you are none the less a murderer. However, I am not surprised. I fully understood your diabolical nature from the first.’”

Now for the first time Farrington’s voice broke from the steady self-control into which he had forced himself, and I heard him mutter in a half-sob,—

“I wonder now how I lived through it.”

Then he went on calmly, “The physician advised that she should be removed to the asylum, and her sister would have acquiesced; but neither my mother, her brother, nor I would hear of it. So it was arranged that she and her brother should live with my mother, and I determined to go away. There was some money which came to Ruth and her brother. It was placed in the hands of my uncle, who was appointed their guardian.

"I struggled for a little while to continue my studies. It was of no use. Life was too desolate; I should have gone mad. I felt that self-preservation demanded that I should be active. I abandoned the law and entered the service of the express company, obtaining a confidential position at once through the influence of my uncle.

"My mother is well and strong. She has devoted her life to Ruth; first for my sake and, too, because she loves her. I see my mother as often as I can, but I have only seen Ruth once since. It was something over a year after the tragedy. We met under strange and unnatural conditions, at least as far as she was concerned. Suffice to say that when she passed from my sight I lost all hope."

He paused, and I was about to speak when he continued,—

"You can now understand why I love the young hero who saved my life to-night. He is Ruth's brother." He sat musing for a moment, and then exclaimed disconnectedly, "Yes, the light of my life has gone out." He was gazing in an abstracted way at the pure white planet.

I placed my hand on his arm and said, "My

dear Farrington, you have a brave and noble heart, and I cannot but think that the future has in store for you brighter and happier days. Look!" and as I pointed he turned his eyes towards the east. The dawn was breaking.

We had reached the station, a simple corral with an adobe house for the men, where fresh horses were in harness awaiting us. In a few minutes we were off again.

A silvery haze had spread over the eastern sky, paling the planets. Soon this changed to a rosier hue. Then a golden light arose, fan-shaped, at times shooting up like the Aurora. This grew steadily and rapidly brighter. We then witnessed a sight that in all human probability I shall never see again.

From Contention down to Benson, sixteen miles, the road followed the San Pedro. The little river runs north. The valley, which was at that time entirely uninhabited, was several miles in width, but in that strangely transparent atmosphere it seemed but a mile or two across. Along the eastern side stretched a range of mountains rising abruptly, perhaps two or three thousand feet, having a comparatively regular brow with sharp pinnacles. At one place these

pinnacles, rising a little higher than usual, took the form of a Gothic castle. On the other side of the broad valley the barren and precipitous Whetstone Range rose to about the same height and had the same regularity. The brow of this range was serrated in a peculiar manner.

As we gazed in wonder and admiration we saw, hanging close over this serrated line, the great white disk of the moon in exact juxtaposition to the sun, since a total eclipse had just occurred. As the day god rose in glorious splendor, bathing the Gothic castle in a flood of gold and crimson light, the queen of night sank behind the line of the opposite rugged range in a sea of silver haze. The effect was truly sublime.

CHAPTER VI

THE RIFLED MAIL

ABOUT six weeks before my interview with Lloyd Farrington in San Francisco, I was sitting in my office in the United States Court Building in that city, when Major Anderson, Chief of the Post-Office Inspectors, entered.

"I came in to consult you," said he, "in regard to an important case of letter-rifling that we are working up. We do not usually trouble your office, as you know, until we are ready to make the arrest, but in this instance we have to do with a bold and cunning criminal; and as our evidence, in the nature of things, must be circumstantial, I thought that you ought to be advised of the proceedings in advance. Shall I present the matter to you or to one of your assistants?"

"Since you consider it so important, major," said I, "I will hear you myself."

"The facts," he proceeded, "as known to our office are these: During the past four months eighteen complaints have reached us of the rifling

of registered letters mailed at different points in the State. In every instance coin has been extracted, amounting in the aggregate to a considerable sum. Of course there may be, and probably are, many other cases not reported. We are thoroughly satisfied that these thefts have all been committed at one place and by one man.

“Under the post-office regulations all registered mail matter is required to pass through some one of the distributing offices which are located at intervals throughout the country, except in cases where a ‘brass lock,’ as a through pouch is called, is sent from one large city to another, as from San Francisco to New York.

“Our investigations show that each of the eighteen rifled letters passed through Melton, and that Melton is the only office through which they all passed. We further find that the same method of extracting the money was adopted in each case. I will show you how it is done.” He took two envelopes from his pocket, one containing a twenty-dollar piece, to illustrate. “A registered letter, stamped, addressed, and endorsed on the reverse by the sender, is numbered and then enclosed in a long outer envelope, which

is securely sealed. It is quite customary in this State to send coin by mail. Letters containing five, ten, or even twenty dollars are frequently received. Now, after shaking the enclosed letter down to one end of the large covering and enclosing envelope, thus," and the major showed me, "our thief would hold the two together, and by giving a quick jerk the piece or pieces of money would be driven through the envelope of the letter and would fall into the covering envelope; then by a little manipulation he would work the coin out under the sealed flap, closing any aperture with mucilage. Thus the package has been rifled, and yet outwardly it appears intact and is sent on without suspicion being aroused.

"Finding that all these cases centred in Melton, and having discovered this uniformity of method, we were morally certain that some one in the post-office at that place was systematically stealing coin from registered letters. I went to Melton and personally investigated. I was not known there, the office having been examined from time to time by one of the other inspectors. I found that the postmaster at Melton, Robert Walton, who has held the office for three

years, is a young man of perhaps thirty-five, who stands well but who has some bad habits. He drinks too freely and neglects the office. He is a local politician of some note and is hail-fellow with all. But his personal and social standing is high. He is married and is a devoted husband. His wife, the daughter of a prominent clergyman who formerly resided at Melton, is honored and loved by all. I was told that Mrs. Walton was very ill and but little hope was entertained for her recovery.

"I could see nothing suspicious about him. But he has a brother-in-law, Luke Wardleigh, a young fellow of perhaps twenty-three, who for four months has been acting as deputy postmaster,—indeed, he has been managing and almost entirely carrying on the office. He is a shrewd, sharp youngster, very retired and reticent; I could not learn much about him. Although a native of Melton he has been away for six or seven years and few knew him. I learned from Wells & Fargo's agent that he had been for a time in the employ of that company in Arizona. I know that they seldom discharge a worthy man. There was no one else in the office, and the building is so arranged that no-

body has access to the letters. The mail-carrier delivers the mail either to Walton or to Wardleigh. Thus it seems to me almost certain that one of these two is the man who has been rifling letters. In my own mind I feel confident that it is young Wardleigh."

I felt inclined to criticise the major's method. The man who is seeking to detect crime should never at first proceed upon a theory. He should seek only for facts. If he commences by suspecting some one he will in all probability seek to arrange the facts so as to justify his suspicions. The safe detective discards all theories and suspicions. Having learned all that can be ascertained, he can then by adjusting and grouping his information form his conclusions—his theory—as to the perpetrator of the crime. From this point he should then pursue a new course of investigation, following out his theory and seeking to learn every new fact suggested by the theory, not for the purpose of establishing it, but to test it; for the true detective should be as ready to demonstrate the innocence of a suspected person as to determine his guilt. After all, however, this is simply applying the true scientific method to the art of the detective.

I say that I was disposed to criticise Major Anderson for attempting to theorize before he knew the facts, but I said nothing and he continued,—

“We now intend to prepare and send through the post-office at Melton three or four decoy letters, and to follow them up, take possession of the post-office, and thoroughly investigate it.”

Post-office inspectors have extensive powers. They are authorized by their letters of appointment to enter and examine any post-office at any time, and take possession of an office if deemed advisable. The scope of their duties, however, is confined to the detection of depredations upon the mails and to peculations and defalcations of officers and employés of the service.

“I thought that I would ask you,” continued the major, “to personally observe the preparation of the test letters, as they are technically termed. We have a small workshop at our office, and if you will have the kindness to name a time I will show you the way it is done.”

I named an hour that afternoon and he withdrew.

I began to feel quite an interest in the matter,

and at the time named went to the rooms of the inspectors.

I found the major, together with Captain Lux and Mr. Smithson, two inspectors whom I knew well; also a clerk, Mr. Clark. Their workshop, as they called it, was quite a curious place. They had cancelling and dating stamps, ink-pads, different fonts of type, and varieties of paper and envelopes. They could counterfeit a letter to appear exactly as it would on leaving any post-office in their division. Four letters were prepared with post-marks and cancelled postage-stamps; they were directed to fictitious persons at points beyond Melton. In each of these letters was placed one or more pieces of coin marked for identification. These marks were carefully noted in a book by Mr. Clark. An impression of each coin was also taken, showing the marks. It was arranged that Captain Lux and Mr. Smithson should take charge of the letters and the next day proceed up the country by different routes. The letters were to be given to mail clerks on the cars at different points, who were to be carefully instructed to deliver them to other clerks passing through Melton and to make suitable memoranda of what

they should do. It was arranged that one of the letters should be mailed earlier than the rest, so that it would reach Melton in the morning and go on to Raymond in the afternoon. The others were to reach Melton in the evening and lie over until the next day. Mr. Smithson was to go up to Raymond and claim and examine that decoy and return and meet Captain Lux at Melton in the evening. At an early hour the next morning they were to take possession of the post-office. Of course Major Anderson had given them a detailed account of his investigations and had communicated his suspicions.

Three days later Major Anderson, accompanied by Captain Lux, came into my office and informed me that they had a prisoner in the marshal's office against whom they desired to file a complaint.

"It was as I suspected," said the major. "Captain Lux and Mr. Smithson carried out the plan, as communicated to you, exactly as arranged; and as a result, they caught Luke Wardleigh *in flagrante delicto*, as you lawyers say. The decoy letters were all traced directly to him; he had actually receipted for all of them. They were found rifled in the manner I described

to you. He was arrested, searched, and one of the marked coins was found in his pocket; he had time to get rid of all the others."

"Yes," said Captain Lux, "and a more brazen rascal I never saw. He took it all as cool as if it were a play. His brother-in-law, the post-master, who was present, was excited almost to frenzy; but my young man showed no concern, and except that he affected a sad look of injured innocence, you might have supposed that he felt no interest in the proceedings. I took him into custody in virtue of my authority as a special deputy marshal, and offered him the option of coming to the city with me without resistance or a formal arrest before some local magistrate. He consented to come, and did so, giving us no trouble. I must say for the chap that he is exceedingly gentle and well behaved. If I did not know him to be such a persistent and cunning thief I should feel sorry for him. Before leaving he asked permission to see his sister, and of course we took him to Walton's house and gave him full opportunity to see her alone."

I prepared an affidavit of complaint and caused a warrant to issue, which was placed in the hands

of the marshal. He took the prisoner into formal custody and then obtained a commitment and conveyed him to the county jail.

The papers the next morning contained a brief account of the arrest, giving Wardleigh's name in full and saying that the case would probably come up for hearing at three o'clock.

The following morning Archibald Kenton, a well-known young attorney who had been Wardleigh's schoolmate, as I afterwards learned, came to me and stated that he had been retained to defend the prisoner; and that he was willing to waive an examination. Although such a course was contrary to our usual practice, still, it was sometimes pursued, and I consented. It was arranged that the prisoner should be brought before the commissioner at two o'clock that day instead of three. At that hour he was produced. Mr. Kenton, Captain Lux, and I were present. At my request his bail was fixed at ten thousand dollars, and he was held to answer before the United States District Court to any indictment that might be found against him by the grand jury. The commissioner then asked if he was prepared to give bail. Mr. Kenton answered that as yet he was not, but that he

would probably produce bondsmen during the day. The commissioner was then proceeding to make out a new commitment when the door opened and two ladies, accompanied by Judge Tremwick, one of the most prominent attorneys at the bar, entered. Both ladies were attired in simple street costumes; there was an air of refinement about them which indicated their social standing. The elder was a woman long past the meridian of life, tall and dignified, with snow-white hair, a pale, clear complexion, and a most sweet and benevolent face. The younger was veiled, and came in upon the arm of Judge Tremwick. She seemed to be in the deepest distress. Seeing Wardleigh, they approached him. He turned deathly pale.

"Luke, what is the meaning of all this?" said the younger of the ladies in a voice choked with tears.

"I will explain it all to you," he replied, "but not now. I intended to write to you or to our friend," turning towards the elder lady, who looked at him with an expression of tenderness and infinite pity in her beautiful blue eyes.

"Then come home with us; this seems like a prison," said she, with a shudder.

The request and the remark caused a slight smile to flit across the faces of the officers about. Poor creature! How little she knew of the hard grasp of the law or of the interior of a real prison!

"Excuse me," said Judge Tremwick, offering the ladies chairs. "We will have to wait a few minutes."

They sat down at his bidding, but with a look of anxious surprise that there should be any delay. Tremwick asked me in a low tone about the bail. I told him what it was. He said that he would sign as one of the bondsmen. He thought a moment and then spoke to Kenton, who immediately left the room, and in a few moments returned accompanied by a gentleman whose place of business was near by. After a brief conference he introduced him to Wardleigh, from which I saw that he was a stranger to the prisoner. The bond was then made out, and Judge Tremwick and the merchant signed it and qualified. In the mean time neither Wardleigh nor either of the ladies had spoken. The party left, the merchant excusing himself and hurrying away. The others departed together, the elder lady leaning on the arm of

Judge Tremwick and the younger clinging to Wardleigh. I did not see her face, but as they passed out I caught the sound of a low sob. Captain Lux walked down the corridor towards my office with me.

"His sweetheart and her mother, I suppose," said he.

"Probably," I replied; "but I wonder what interest Judge Tremwick can have in the case? If the elder lady is his client he would of course come down with her, although he does not take criminal business; but yet he gave the bail, which is large, without being asked. He evidently made himself responsible to the other bondman. A man would hardly do this without knowing something about the case, or at least unless he had perfect confidence in the prisoner."

"Well," said the captain, "there is no telling what a man will do in the presence of a lovely woman. Let us assume that the face behind the veil is as beautiful as the figure of the lady is graceful, and we have an explanation."

I simply said that I thought that he was mistaken. The whole matter was quite inexplicable to me.

CHAPTER VII

THE TRIAL

A FEW days later I went over the case again with the inspectors and determined to present it to the grand jury as soon as possible. Although I would have been safe in resting on the decoy letters, I preferred not to do so, and selected one of the actual complaints which had been investigated by the officers. I joined the case with the three "test" letters found rifled in the office at Melton. The complaint which I chose was where a father in Shasta County had sent twenty dollars to his daughter in Berkeley. The letter reached Berkeley after stopping over at Melton, and the money was missing, there being the usual hole in the lower left-hand corner of the enclosed envelope. Among the witnesses subpoenaed were the father who sent the letter and the daughter who received it.

I had no difficulty in obtaining the indictment. The members of the grand jury were greatly interested and followed the evidence closely. In the case of the Berkeley letter, I proved by

Rev. Talbot Jordan that he had himself mailed the letter to his daughter, Miss Edith. I traced the letter to Melton, where it was receipted for by Wardleigh, and then on to Berkeley, where it was delivered to Miss Jordan, who opened it before leaving the office and found the money missing; which fact she reported at once to the postmaster. I examined each person who had handled the letter; all swore that they had passed it on intact. The appearance of Miss Jordan made a little sensation in the dull, monotonous jury-room. She was as pretty as a picture, bright, blooming, and so sweet and modest that when she had finished her testimony half of the jurors wanted to accompany her to the door. I claimed that privilege as my prerogative. When I bowed her out she turned, with a serious, anxious look in her eyes, and said,—

“I hope that you will not succeed in finding out who did it. It would be dreadful if any one should be sent to prison on my testimony.” She evidently did not know that any one had been arrested for the crime.

The evidence against the prisoner, as to this letter, when taken in connection with the testimony of the inspectors and the proof obtained

when Wardleigh was arrested, made a very strong case of circumstantial evidence against him. I soon presented the proof. I had already prepared an indictment, containing four counts, each of which charged a separate felony. I then withdrew; in a few moments I was summoned, and informed by the foreman that the grand jury had found a "True bill."

A week later the defendant was arraigned. He entered a plea of "not guilty." I then moved that the case be set for trial two weeks later. To this Kenton bitterly objected, insisting that I was persecuting and "railroading" his client. The judge said, rather severely, that counsel appeared to have forgotten that he was not before the police court; that ample time would be given the defendant to obtain his witnesses and prepare for trial. There being no pretence that he could not get his witnesses in two weeks, the case was set for the time indicated by me.

The day of the trial arrived. I had all of my witnesses in attendance. Wardleigh came in accompanied by his attorney. I saw a number of strangers present whom I took to be his witnesses. The room in which the district court

was held was large, and, on a cloudy day, a little gloomy. I expected to see the ladies who had accompanied Judge Tremwick to the commissioner's office, and perhaps that eminent counsel, but they were not there. The only lady present was Miss Jordan, who sat talking pleasantly with her father, a dignified but cheerful gentleman not above five-and-forty. They seemed very happy together. She was dressed in a close-fitting habit of some dark color and wore a rather sombre hat, but for all that her sweet face and bright eyes made a bit of sunshine in the great room.

The judge entered and took his seat; the bailiff proclaimed the court in session. After some preliminary business the jurors were called, and it was found that thirty-four were present. The case of the United States against Luke Wardleigh was then called and answered ready. The prisoner was directed by the deputy marshal to stand up. As he arose I was struck by his handsome face and figure. I had not previously observed his appearance, having only seen him in the commissioner's office, where he was seated. As he stood there calmly facing the court, I had a strange, vague impression, which I have here-

tofore mentioned, that I had seen him and particularly noticed him before. Slightly built and of medium height, he had the appearance of possessing great physical strength. His bearing was gentlemanly. He wore a perfectly fitting black business suit and scarf of olive color set off by a pearl. His hair, almost black, curled a little and clung closely to his intellectual forehead. He had a dark, shapely moustache. His features were regular; his complexion was a clear brunette, and his face was lighted by a pair of brilliant hazel eyes. Happening to look towards Rev. Mr. Jordan and his daughter, I noticed that the latter became suddenly excited. She asked her father something, probably whether Wardleigh was the prisoner, to which inquiry he gave an affectionate nod, and she then became as pale as death.

At that moment the court directed that we proceed to impanel the jury. We had considerable difficulty in securing twelve men. Kenton used his full allowance of ten peremptory challenges. He questioned and cross-questioned every one called to the box. He seemed particularly anxious to exclude all who knew me or any of the inspectors. He began to show

an unusual bitterness. I could not understand his purpose. At length the jury was obtained and sworn. I made my opening statement. While mentioning the evidence which I intended to produce I turned towards Miss Jordan, and was not a little disconcerted to see that she was looking incredulous and indignant.

The trial lasted four days. It was one of the most interesting, absorbing, and at the same time one of the most annoying and disagreeable cases that I ever managed.

I concluded to put in the evidence relating to the decoy letters first. My witnesses were cross-examined and badgered by Kenton, but they were not shaken. Captain Lux then took the stand and told how they entered the post-office in the early morning of the day of the arrest. They found Walton, the postmaster, there; Wardleigh came in a moment later. They showed their authority and asked to see the registered mail. Walton said that it was in a drawer in the desk, but he did not have his keys. Wardleigh, on being asked, produced a duplicate key. The letters were found, and Mr. Smithson was about to open one of them when Wardleigh suggested that the law and the regu-

lations forbade any post-office official to open a letter.

“Not of this kind,” said Captain Lux, with a laugh, and Mr. Smithson proceeded. The letters were found rifled in the manner I have described. They then asked to see all coin in the office, which the postmaster showed. None of the marked coins were found. The inspectors then searched Wardleigh, who made no resistance. In one of his pockets they found a piece of the marked money,—a silver half-dollar. At this point Kenton showed his hand. He cross-examined Captain Lux, and subsequently Mr. Smithson, in a way to suggest that they had probably put the coin into Wardleigh’s pocket while pretending to search him. I was, of course, indignant at this, but also surprised. I saw the weak point in my case and supposed that he would attack it. There was no reason given why the inspectors did not also search Walton. Except the finding of the piece of marked coin in Wardleigh’s pocket there was nothing to show that he had opened the letters, any more than the postmaster. I was therefore surprised, and I suppose in my zeal pleased to find that the point had been overlooked by the defence. The ac-

count of the arrest followed, the witnesses admitting that the prisoner quietly but firmly denied his guilt. But the proof was that upon being asked to account for the marked money in his pocket he had said that he could not.

The hour of adjournment had now arrived. We had taken a recess at noon and I had hurried away to keep an appointment. The court admonished the jurymen not to permit any one to discuss the case with them and not to discuss it among themselves. The witnesses were notified to be in attendance the next day at eleven o'clock, and the court adjourned.

From what I had seen I was curious to know whether Miss Jordan was acquainted with Wardleigh. Where seated, at the bar of the court, his back was towards her and he had probably not seen her. At recess he was talking with his attorney, and she went out with her father as I left the room. I now noticed that, seeing her as he arose, he looked at her carelessly, then sharply and intently. There was at first a puzzled expression on his face; then, as if he remembered something, he gave a proud

glance. A faint blush overspread his cheeks. She looked towards him and dropped her eyes, then looked up again bravely and turned crimson. There was, however, no sign of recognition by either. I was utterly nonplussed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE VERDICT

IN one of the leading papers the next morning there appeared an account of the first day of the trial which struck me as curious. The inspectors were represented in the most unfavorable light possible and the acquittal of the defendant was confidently predicted. I thought that I could see Kenton's hand in the article. I wondered whether it was not designed to deceive some one into the belief that Wardleigh was in no danger. I thought of the veiled lady.

The second day of the trial proceeded. The same witnesses and persons were present as the day before. But there were more spectators. I was so absorbed that I did not notice any one not connected with the case.

I now offered my evidence as to the Jordan letter substantially as I had presented it to the grand jury. The testimony of Mr. Jordan, however, went a little more into details. I confess that I drew him out because I was curious to know something of the sweet girl whose sym-

pathy with the prisoner was so apparent to me. He stated that he was an Episcopal minister at Berkeley. That at the time he mailed the letter in question he was taking a vacation and resting at the ranch of a friend in view of Mount Shasta. He had stayed longer than he intended and wrote to his daughter to send him some magazines and books. Driving into town with his friends, he enclosed the coin and registered and mailed the letter himself.

"So you failed to get your books and periodicals?" I inquired.

"Oh, no," said he, "I received them promptly. My dear child took the money from her own allowance, stinted herself, I fear, and bought all that I asked for and more. She did not even write me that the money failed to reach her." He glanced towards her affectionately and proudly. Poor child! Every one in the courtroom looked towards her, and she blushed to the tips of her pretty ears. When she was called to the witness-stand we had quite a little scene. It was touching and painful, but did not tend to break or weaken the chain of circumstantial evidence against the prisoner. When I had proven the single fact for which she was called

—that the letter reached her without the coin, rifled in the peculiar manner noticed—I had no further questions to ask.

“You do not mean to say that you have any personal knowledge that this defendant opened your letter or extracted the money from it?” asked Kenton. The question was inconsequential and hardly cross-examination; but much latitude is allowed and I did not object. The truth is I was quite curious to see what interest she would show in Wardleigh.

“Certainly not,” she replied.

“You do not know and never saw the defendant before this trial, did you?”

I now began to see that Kenton had an object in view. I noticed that Wardleigh tried to check him as he was asking the question and seemed annoyed.

“I do not know him, sir, but I have seen him before,” she replied, without any hesitation.

“When, where, and under what circumstances, please?”

Again Wardleigh tried to prevent the question, but Kenton did not heed him. The judge looked towards me to see whether I intended to object, and seeing that I did not, was about

to direct her not to answer; but I rather think that his curiosity got the better of him, too, and he desisted.

“In Berkeley, some months ago,” she answered, with heightened color, “I saw him save the life of an old lady and her granddaughter at the risk of his own. Their horses were madly running away; the driver had fallen out, and he, this young gentleman, threw himself in front of the horses and, though they dragged him a long distance, he mastered them.”

There was quite a sensation, suppressed but nevertheless felt. The judge looked half indignant and half amused. I think that he considered it a cleverly prepared scene. The jurors seemed interested and sympathetic. I did not look at the spectators, but Wardleigh’s attorney had a triumphant smile on his face. I felt annoyed, for I had had experience enough in criminal trials to fear the result. I have learned that although the theory of the law is that it is the duty of the jury merely to say whether or not the accused is guilty, leaving to the judge the matter of punishment, still, juries will not, as a rule, convict unless they are satisfied that the accused is not only guilty, but that he ought

to be punished. Now in this case I entertained no doubt whatever of the prisoner's guilt. I deemed the evidence sufficient to warrant his conviction, and I was not pleased at the prospect of the defeat of justice by an acquittal secured in this way.

"But, of course," said I to the witness in my zeal, "this does not change the fact that the coin which your father sent to you was not in the letter when you received it." My question was objected to on the ground that I had already gone into that matter, and the judge promptly sustained the objection. But Miss Jordan answered my question all the same and gave me a parting shot.

"No, sir," said she; "but I don't believe for a moment that he took it." The jurors laughed. The judge interposed, and said,—

"The witness must restrain herself. It is not what she believes, but what she knows, that is evidence."

She became quite crestfallen at this reproof and her eyes filled with tears as she left the stand. I glanced at Wardleigh. There was a strange expression,—a new light in his face.

The court now took a recess with the usual formalities. Before the adjournment I suggested that we might excuse Mr. Jordan and his daughter from further attendance. Kenton objected, saying that he might wish to recall them for further cross-examination. But I noticed Wardleigh speaking earnestly to him, and I heard the words, "I will not allow her to be annoyed." Then Kenton withdrew his objection. They were discharged and did not return during the trial.

As we walked out of the court-room Kenton whispered to me, "I was afraid that Miss Jordan would tell that she was the granddaughter who was in the carriage, but she did not. It would have spoiled the effect. Her interest in my client would have been too apparent."

During the recess I ran over the evidence in the case and I found I had nothing further to offer. I was dissatisfied and not confident of the result. There was of course no direct proof that Wardleigh had opened the letters. As I have explained, the circumstances pointed as much to Walton as to his deputy. Except the proof of possession by the latter of the marked half-dollar, I had entirely failed to account for the

non-production or discovery of the other marked coin which had been put in the decoy letters. I felt that the sympathies of the jurors were with the prisoner.

However, as often happens in such cases, the defendant's lawyer came to my relief. Before resting the prosecution I called Major Anderson to the stand to prove his constant possession of the rifled letters, including the Jordan letter, since the arrest. Kenton began to cross-examine him again :

"Is this so-called Jordan letter the only case of the rifling of registered mail reported to you from that part of the State?"

"No, sir," answered the major; "within the past four months there have been seventeen other cases reported to us."

"Seventeen other cases! And why have you only mentioned this one?"

"I have not been asked about them."

"Oh, I see! the attorney for the government has kept such information as might be favorable to the defendant from seeing the light." Kenton said this with a sneer and with a withering look directed towards me, but intended to be seen by the jury.

“Very well, sir, that will do. You can step down.”

“Excuse me, Mr. Kenton,” said I, “this is my witness and I am quite far from being through with him now that you have opened up a new and important phase of the case.”

He saw that he had blundered and fought vigorously by objecting, protesting, and contesting at every step, but it was unavailing. The court ruled that having himself asked concerning these additional letters I was entitled to show everything about them.

And now to shorten this account: during the remainder of the day and the greater part of the next I was occupied in presenting to the jury, through the inspectors, the seventeen complaints and the rifled letters to which they related. I showed that every one of them had passed through Melton; that they were all rifled in the same way,—all of the evidence detailed to me by Major Anderson. I proved that in nearly every instance the letter had been receipted for by Wardleigh. There was a curious fact came to light which had not been noticed before. The depredations had commenced some four months before Wardleigh’s arrest, had con-

tinued for two months, had ceased for three weeks, and commenced again. I noticed from the handwriting on the registry book that Wardleigh was apparently not in the office during the time when the depredations did not occur. This came out as I cross-examined him when he took the stand. I considered it a very strong fact, almost amounting to demonstration.

When I finally rested for the government at noon on the third day, the case had taken a different aspect. No one now doubted the guilt of the prisoner. The evidence was simply conclusive. Nor was Kenton able to break it down. He made no opening statement, reserving his points for his argument. He put Wardleigh on the stand, who made a good appearance but was not able to clear up the overwhelming case against him. He, however, positively denied that he opened the letters. Kenton tried to show that he was absent a considerable part of the day when the decoy letters arrived, but I showed that he was there in the evening when the letters were most probably opened. To do this in rebuttal I called Walton, whom I had not intended to examine. He presented a pitiable sight. He hesitated and stammered, but nevertheless estab-

lished the fact. I regretted, however, that I had required him to be sworn. It was hard to compel him to testify against one so nearly related to him. Kenton offered several witnesses to the previous good character of the accused. I made no effort to question it. Reputation and character only become available as a defence when the evidence leaves a doubt as to whether the accused committed the crime of which he stands charged.

On the fourth day the case was argued and given to the jury. Kenton was exceedingly bitter because he was desperate. He attacked the inspectors and he attacked me. I paid no attention to him so far as his assault on me went, but I defended the inspectors, of whose integrity I knew, and I animadverted with much severity upon Kenton's unbridled tongue. Finally, the eminent and learned judge, who for more than thirty years had presided in the court, charged the jury. As usual it was a masterly effort. He summed up the evidence with remarkable clearness, precision, and fairness. The jury were out less than a half-hour. They returned a verdict of "guilty as charged," recommending the prisoner to the mercy of the court.

Wardleigh seemed surprised and much affected, but bore himself bravely and soon recovered his countenance. Kenton was crestfallen and very much depressed. Walton was far more deeply affected than Wardleigh. He seemed to be dazed, then broke down and wept like a child. Under the practice in the court the prisoner was taken into custody by the marshal. At my suggestion, instead of being sent to the county jail in the city he was removed to the jail in Oakland, a less disagreeable place.

The trial was concluded on Friday evening. The court appointed Monday as the day for pronouncing sentence.

CHAPTER IX

AN UNEXPLAINED WARNING

MY interview with Lloyd Farrington at the Palace Hotel took place in the evening of the last day of the trial. It will be remembered that I parted with him on Market Street in front of the hotel, when he took a cable car for the Oakland ferry; it being his design to see Luke Wardleigh again that night,—to remain with him, in fact, as I afterwards learned.

While I stood there for a moment I thought I saw Clanton getting on another car, as already mentioned. I paid little attention to the circumstance, however, not being at all worried at the possibility that Clanton was following Farrington with an evil purpose. I had such implicit confidence in the courage and skill of Farrington that the thought of his being in danger did not even occur to me.

I turned to re-enter the hotel, and as I did so I looked at my watch. It was a few minutes before half-past nine; I reflected that Lloyd would just have time to catch the half-past nine boat. I was about to go to my apartments;

I was residing at the Palace at the time. My family, as will be seen presently, were out of town, however, and I was easily diverted from my purpose.

I remembered at that moment that my wife's sister had telephoned me during the day that her husband, Dr. Harvey Guthrie, who was my close friend, would return that evening by the Overland from the East. I determined to go down and meet him, and as I felt the need of exercise I concluded to walk; I saw that I had sufficient time to reach the landing before the boat would be due.

I accordingly stepped into the corridor of the hotel and sent a boy to the cloak-room for my overcoat and a favorite heavy black-thorn stick which I kept there. They were brought to me promptly and I hurriedly started off.

The fog was thickening rapidly and a stiff breeze was blowing down the street: it was just such a night as I liked for a stroll. I enjoy a sea fog in San Francisco; it is never chilly and is always invigorating. When I want to be particularly alone or when I want to think without being disturbed I often wander out on such nights.

The street was quite deserted, and as I hastened along at a brisk pace there was nothing to divert my attention. I accordingly tried to concentrate my mind upon the strange and unexpected phase that the Wardleigh case had taken within the few hours that had elapsed since the close of the trial.

I soon found, however, that my thoughts were in a confused whirl. Farrington's assertions and, above all, his manly bearing and profound earnestness had quite upset me. The Wardleigh trial had been interesting and exciting, but when it was over, when the verdict of guilty was recorded and the prisoner ordered into custody, I felt no regrets. I suppose I really experienced a certain sense of triumphant satisfaction in having secured a conviction against rather unfavorable odds. At any rate, I had no doubt whatever of Luke Wardleigh's guilt, as I had told Lloyd Farrington.

Then came the revelation of Farrington's supreme confidence in the innocence of his friend and, what was still more startling to me, the discovery of the identity of Wardleigh with the young man whom I had seen with Farrington in Arizona.

As I walked on down the street through the damp murky night, undisturbed by the few passers-by and undiverted by the rushing and clanging of the many cable cars which ran to and from the ferry, or by the monotonous blowing and bellowing of the distant fog-horn,—in the midst of all this, which I probably did not consciously notice then, I tried, as I say, to think of the Wardleigh case, tried to consider whether there was any possibility of my being mistaken as to Wardleigh's guilt. Somehow I was unable to bring myself to review the facts. Do what I would my thoughts wandered and reverted to the scenes in Arizona three years before. The hours and the incidents of that night passed before me like a panorama. I saw Wardleigh, as in a dream, first insisting upon accompanying his friend who was in danger, then riding like mad in the shadow of the eclipse, to meet and thwart the assassin; heard the call to halt at the well by the stunted trees, the shots, and his defiant laugh. I distinctly remembered how proud and handsome he looked as he came out to meet Farrington at Contention after saving his life, and I was at length able to understand the impression that I

had had in the court-room as he arose the first day of the trial. Then I recalled the romantic account of Farrington's life, as he related it to me amid the heavenly splendors of that morning. The whole sad and touching story came back vividly and stood out more clearly than even the scenes of the trial.

I now saw that the tall and beautiful lady with the sweet, pale face and snow-white hair, who came to the commissioner's office when Luke Wardleigh was held to bail, was Lloyd Farrington's mother,—I recalled the resemblance of her dark, deep-blue eyes to his. The veiled lady who accompanied her, about whom we were so curious, was not Wardleigh's sweetheart, but his sister, Ruth Wardleigh, whom Farrington loved, and who was or had been afflicted by a terrible delusion. Perhaps she had recovered. If not, or even if she had, would not the agony of this new sorrow drive her wholly mad? Mrs. Walton, the wife of the postmaster at Melton, was Ruth Wardleigh's sister. She had only appeared as a shadow in Farrington's story. Did not Major Anderson say that he had learned that she was ill beyond hope of recovery? Would not this shock of the news

of her brother's disgrace kill her? The whole complication began to be horrible to me. Then I thought again and again of Farrington's positive assertion that Luke Wardleigh was guiltless of the crime of which he had been convicted. He had not merely stated it as a matter of belief,—as a conclusion from his confidence in his friend's integrity; on the contrary, he had spoken of Wardleigh's innocence deliberately and as within his own knowledge. Of Farrington's absolute sincerity and truthfulness I had no doubt. What was I to think? I could not be mistaken. The proof of Wardleigh's guilt was simply overwhelming,—as complete and satisfactory as a mathematical demonstration, as I had argued to the jury. The conclusiveness of the proof was more complete than if it had been direct evidence. Witnesses may lie, may be mistaken, but the logic of entirely concurring circumstances is unanswerable. Still, now that the identity of Wardleigh had been made known to me, I found myself thinking all the while of the improbability that he had committed the crime. Then I began to search my memory for some fact that might suggest the possibility of his innocence, but I could

think of nothing. As I now recall the state of my mind that night I am not certain whether I was anxious to find a flaw in the case or not, but I think I was. At any rate, I am sure that I desired above all things that there should be no miscarriage of justice. I remembered that I had a complete transcript of the testimony in the case at my office, together with all of the documentary evidence and the reports of the inspectors. I determined that before moving for sentence upon Wardleigh I would make an exhaustive and critical re-examination of the whole case.

I had now reached the vicinity of the ferry-landing, and looking up, I saw by the illuminated clock in the little wooden tower over the long, low, ramshackle ferry buildings which stood there at that time that it lacked but a few minutes of ten. Just then the whistle of an arriving boat gurgled through the dense fog and was repeated again and again, indicating that the boat was having difficulty in making a landing.

I hastened forward to watch for Dr. Guthrie, but only to learn from an employé of the company who recognized me that the Over-

land had been delayed and would not arrive until two hours later. I then concluded not to wait, as I had no appointment to meet him.

Not caring to face the rising west wind which was driving the fog down the street, I determined to ride back to the hotel, and was about to enter a cable car when I heard my name called. Turning quickly, I was surprised to see Farrington approaching from the direction of the ferry waiting-room. When he came up he expressed surprise at seeing me there, and I explained to him in a few words that I had walked down to meet a friend whom I was expecting by the Overland. I did not mention the name of Dr. Guthrie, however.

Farrington then told me that he had been prevented from crossing by the dense fog on the bay. The boat that should have gone at nine-thirty had been held back. The pilot whom he sought out was of the opinion that the gale would soon sweep the fog inland and that in a short time the bay would be clear.

"I am glad," continued Farrington, "that you came down by accident. I have had a most strange experience since I parted with you,

scarcely half an hour ago, and I am filled just now with something of the spirit of the Ancient Mariner."

I gave him my full attention at once. Instead of continuing he placed his hand on my arm and with a gentle pressure moved with me into a covered way, a short distance north from the cable turntable, which led to the outer waiting-room of the ferry. Everything was dripping wet and the surroundings were altogether gloomy and uninviting. Farrington did not have an overcoat and I supposed that he was chilled and wanted to go inside. But when we reached the passage-way which led by the ticket-office to the door of the outer room he paused and, drawing me to one side, stopped short.

"It was just here," said he, reflectively, in a low voice, "that I heard the warning."

I looked at him, in the dim light which fell from the flickering gas-jets in front of the ticket-windows, and saw a strange, tense expression on his face.

"Did I understand you——" I commenced.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Mr. Grafton," said he, "I have no right to ask your attention and then talk in enigmas. Let me explain as far

as I can, though it will still remain a mystery to me and doubtless to both of us."

I was quite nonplussed. If I had not had such implicit confidence in Farrington's physical and moral courage and in his rare balance of mind I might have thought that he was unstrung and flighty. In fact, what he proceeded to say did put my confidence to the utmost test.

"It was in regard to Clanton," said Farrington, rather disconnectedly and abruptly. "Tell me," he continued, "does he still carry that blood-red mark on his face which you told me you were able to distinguish in the glare of the moon that night when he attempted to assassinate me at Contention?"

I replied that it was that mark of Cain on Clanton's face, as some one had called it, which had attracted my attention at the hotel and by which I had at once recognized him.

"By the bye, have you seen him here at the ferry?" I asked the question rather abruptly and almost apprehensively, remembering the incident just after Farrington and I parted in front of the hotel when I thought I saw Clanton follow him on the next car.

"I have not," replied Lloyd, answering my

question, "yet I believe he is lurking near here with a view to another attempt on my life." He spoke as calmly as if he were talking of some danger hanging over a stranger at a distance. There was, however, the same tension in his voice and the same light in his eyes that I had heard and seen that night at Contention when he sprang down from the stage and met Luke Wardleigh.

"If you have not seen him," said I, quickly, "some one must have told you that he followed you, for you say you have been warned, and I believe that he did come to the ferry; I am quite sure that I saw him board the next car after you left me."

"Then there need be no further doubt," said he, still speaking in that low, musical tone, "though I myself had no doubt before."

"By whom were you warned?" I inquired with deep interest and much more excitement than Lloyd showed.

"That is the mystery," said he, putting his hand upon my shoulder and looking into my eyes with a tender far-away look in his own,— "a mystery, and yet to me a vivid reality.

"On my way down from the hotel," he con-

tinued, "my car was caught in a jam some distance short of the stopping-place. I sprang out to run forward, fearing that I might miss the boat. At that moment I met persons returning from the ferry and heard some one say that there would be no boat leaving at half-past nine on account of the density of the fog. I thereupon slackened my pace and walked this way slowly, feeling very much disappointed and depressed, for I knew that Luke would be expecting me. When I reached the point at which we are now standing I stopped for a moment, thinking whether I had not better find a telephone and get word to Luke. Then occurred the strangest experience that man ever had. I distinctly heard these words: 'Oh, sir, for God's sake beware! A strange man is following you and intends to murder you. He has a hideous face with a blood-red mark upon it,—a mark that resembles a claw.'

"Judge of my astonishment, Mr. Grafton, when I tell you that these words were uttered in the voice of one whom I have not seen for a long time and who is, as I am absolutely certain, miles away. I say that I heard the words, and yet I did not hear them in the

ordinary sense; they seemed to take form and vibrate in my inner consciousness."

"Has Farrington gone mad?" I exclaimed to myself without speaking aloud. "Is he, too, the unhappy victim of hallucinations?" Yet he was so calm and rational. I did not know what to say and he saw my embarrassment.

"How foolish I am," said he, "to speak of such a fancy, for, after all, it must have been a fancy! Yet it seemed so real that I felt impelled to relate it to you when I saw you approaching. I can almost understand," he added, with a low, gentle laugh, "the story of the Ancient Mariner and the wedding guest."

There was just then a succession of rapid taps of the bell in the little tower, and we knew that the ferry-boat would shortly start upon her trip. Farrington expressed his satisfaction, and we moved towards the entrance of the waiting-room, from which there was a door leading into the inner room, at which the ticket-taker sat. The upper end of the covered way, a short distance beyond the door leading into the outer room, was open.

"Let us see how the fog looks," said Farrington, stepping forward to the end of the

corridor, where he could have an unobstructed view towards the north and west. I was also interested and curious and so kept by his side.

There was no gas at the end of the corridor and the night beyond was dark. Some light, however, fell through the open door of the waiting-room.

Before we could reach the open air to take our observation Farrington gave a sudden though almost imperceptible start.

"Again!" I heard him exclaim.

An instant later a figure rushed from a dark corner. I saw an uplifted hand and the faint glitter of steel. Farrington sprang away from me and I saw that he had drawn a revolver.

"Stop, Clanton!" said he, in a low and calm though commanding tone. "Stop! surrender, or you will meet your death."

"Never!" the fellow hissed, and rushed on.

Whether Farrington would have fired at that moment I know not, but from what occurred subsequently I rather think that he would have tried to spare the villain's life even then. I am sure, however, that I should not have done so. Had I been armed I would have shot the fellow

as I would a wild beast. As it was, I felt impelled by my indignation and the excitement of the situation to do something. I held my heavy blackthorn walking-stick in my hand, and far quicker than I can write the words I raised it,—raised it when Clanton first rushed forward. As the word “Never!” fell from his lips I aimed a blow at his head which would have felled him had he received it. He dodged, but my stick struck his uplifted arm, and with a fierce oath he dropped the knife from his hand.

“Surrender, Clanton!” again exclaimed Lloyd in that calm, penetrating, resonant voice; “surrender or I shall fire.”

The murderer uttered something between his teeth, turned, stooped low, and shot out into the night.

I, of course, thought that Farrington would fire, but he did not. I confess that I was disappointed and indignant. I said as much and deplored the escape of the assassin.

“He has not escaped,” said Lloyd, quietly. “He will be caught by the police, or I will capture him. There was no necessity to take his life. Besides,” he added, with a gentle laugh, “if I had shot him I might have been detained

on this side to-night, and I promised Luke to return."

The bell rang, he grasped my hand warmly, uttered some unnecessary thanks, and hurried away.

CHAPTER X

AS MISS JORDAN SAW IT

THE next day was Saturday, and there being no court I locked myself up in my office, took all of the documents, letters, books, and papers in the Wardleigh case, together with the testimony which had been transcribed by the official stenographer, and spent several hours.

As a result of my investigation I repaired to the judge's chambers, and without giving him any reason stated that I would not be prepared to move for sentence on Monday, and asked him to continue the matter for one week. I presume he thought that I expected that a motion for a new trial would be made by Kenton and that I would not be ready to argue it. He seemed a little surprised, but said that he would postpone the sentence of the prisoner as I requested. He then took occasion to comment pleasantly upon my conduct of the trial, saying that in his long experience he had never seen a prosecution, depending upon circumstantial evidence, more satisfactorily made out.

I then went to the county jail in Oakland and had an interview with Wardleigh in the private office of the jailer. I thought I might find Lloyd Farrington there, but did not. My interview amounted to nothing, and I came away dissatisfied and more mystified than ever. Wardleigh calmly and with constant dignity protested that he was innocent, but beyond that he would say nothing. I tried to induce him to suggest some theory to account for the circumstances which seemed to establish his guilt. He simply said that he had no suggestions to make.

I returned to the city and to my office, and immediately sent for Archibald Kenton. Without entering into explanations I suggested to him that if he would appear in court on Monday and present a motion for a new trial I would set it for argument a week later. Also that if he would move to admit his client to bail pending the hearing of the motion I would consent to bail in the sum of fifteen thousand dollars. Kenton was much pleased.

I was about to leave my office for the day when Rev. Mr. Jordan and his daughter, Miss

Edith, entered. I offered them seats, which they took.

"I beg your pardon, sir, for this intrusion," said the clergyman, "but I have called to see you in regard to a public matter."

"No intrusion whatever," I replied; "as a public official it is my duty, and in this instance it is my pleasure, to receive those who call." I bowed,—more particularly towards his lovely daughter. He hesitated a moment, and I added, "I think that this is the third or fourth time I have met Miss Jordan,—am I to understand that you are here again in regard to the same case?"

"Yes, sir," she replied; "I insisted upon my father coming over. We saw in the papers this morning that the unfortunate young gentleman who was accused of opening my letter was convicted and has been sent to prison. Oh, sir, I feel dreadfully about it, for I am sure I accused an innocent man."

"The truth is," said Mr. Jordan, "my daughter, who understands these unhappy matters very little, thinks that she is blamable for the conviction of young Wardleigh,—she looks upon herself as his accuser."

“My dear young lady,” I said, turning to her, “you are not responsible for the prisoner’s misfortune. You were called to prove a single fact which was but a link in the chain of evidence against him. You were in no sense his prosecutor.” Then, as I thought of the worry she had given me by exhibiting her sympathy for the prisoner in the presence of the jury, I could not help saying to her father,—

“In truth, I am not at all indebted to Miss Jordan for the result; she nearly acquitted the defendant.”

I was a little sorry that I had said it, for she blushed painfully. Her father, I thought, was slightly annoyed, but still he was amused. Miss Jordan, however, instantly rallied, and said with ever so much dignity and modesty,—

“If you mean, sir, that I showed my belief that the young gentleman is innocent, I can only say that I am truly sorry that I could not have induced the judge and the jury to see it as I did.”

“Do you really think that the accused is not guilty?” I asked.

“Why, sir, of course I do. I know it. I am only surprised that anybody could be so ob-

tuse as not to see that he has been falsely accused and improperly convicted."

There was a slightly malicious and vengeful light in her pretty eyes, and an expression which said plainly enough, "There, sir, for your impudence a few moments ago;" but I only thought of it for an instant, as I was intent upon a purpose that had suddenly found itself in my mind.

I have a profound faith in woman's intuition. Often where reason ends intuition begins. A clear-minded and pure-hearted woman will frequently reach an absolutely correct conclusion in an instant which it would take a man hours to attain by the slower and cruder processes of ratiocination. Here was this girl whose heart was without guile, whose mind was as clear as a crystal, unbiassed by prejudices or preconceived notions concerning the rules of evidence and all that, and who believed—knew, as she said—that Luke Wardleigh was not guilty. I determined that I would question her and see if she could trace her conclusions back, or, in other words, could give the reasons for her intuitive belief. This may seem absurd, but it is not. Woman's intuition is apparently the negation of the processes of logic, yet it is doubt-

less not so. It is only that her mind travels through the processes more rapidly. Having reached her conclusion, she is often able to reason the matter out by a reverse method and yet clearly and logically.

"Miss Jordan," said I, "let me ask you, with your father's permission, to tell me why you think Luke Wardleigh is innocent of the charge upon which he has been tried and convicted."

"Why, certainly, Mr. Grafton. It is so simple."

She thereupon began to review such of the evidence as she had heard in a rapid, earnest way. There was a depth of sympathy in the tone of her voice and an air of sincerity in her manner. I was astonished and deeply impressed by what she said. It threw an entirely new light upon the case.

"I would like to add a word to what my daughter has said," remarked Mr. Jordan. "I entirely acquiesce in her conclusions, and, to me, her reasons are convincing. I beg to suggest, in addition, that character should have its weight and influence. I understand that this young man is the son of the late Rev. Jasper Wardleigh, whose untimely and tragic death so

profoundly affected the Christian people of this State a few years ago. I knew him well. He was a grand man. Learning that this young gentleman was the son of my old friend, I made diligent inquiries as to his standing. He bears a reputation above reproach."

"I am greatly obliged to you," said I, rising, "and to you also, Miss Jordan, for this visit. I cannot now say what I will do, but I feel that you will be pleased when I tell you that Mr. Wardleigh will not be sentenced on Monday as announced. The matter will be continued for one week, and in the mean time he will be released on bail."

They seemed very much gratified, and were about to withdraw when it occurred to me to inquire of Miss Jordan whether she knew Mrs. Farrington and Miss Wardleigh in Berkeley.

"No, sir," said she, with a bright, lovely smile and a look that said as plainly as words, "I forgive you everything." "No, sir, but I understand perfectly what you wish, and I will see them before the sun goes down."

I bowed and they departed.

Just then an evening paper was brought in. As I glanced over it I caught sight of a special

despatch from Melton which greatly interested me. Leaving out the sensational head-lines it read:

“ Robert Walton, the postmaster at this place, was brought home to-day apparently in a dying condition. He has been for several days in attendance on the United States Court in San Francisco as a witness in the case of the United States *vs.* Luke Wardleigh, who was formerly his deputy, and who was convicted for opening letters and stealing money therefrom.

“ Mr. Walton has been in excellent health for a long time, but on the train yesterday evening, just after leaving Oakland, he was suddenly attacked by what appeared to be heart-failure. At Sacramento he was removed to the hotel, and lay in an unconscious state all night. This morning he was brought on to Melton and carried to his house.

“ Mr. Walton, who is held in very high esteem in this community, has the profound sympathy of all, and more particularly because his esteemed wife is and has been very ill. The friends of the family fear the effect of this terrible blow upon her.”

CHAPTER XI

THE COTTAGE AT BERKELEY

I EXPECTED to see Lloyd Farrington at the Palace Hotel that evening, and I looked for him anxiously, but he did not appear.

The next day, Sunday, without any defined purpose, drawn by a fascination that had possession of me, I took the boat to the Oakland mole and the connecting train to Berkeley. I walked up past the University grounds towards the hills. I met a city acquaintance, whose home I knew to be over there. He greeted me cordially and insisted upon my walking up to his place; I excused myself, promising to pay him a visit at some future time.

"The truth is," I remarked, "I am anxious to find a young gentleman whose mother lives somewhere near here,—Lloyd Farrington; perhaps you may know him."

"I know him slightly, or rather I did several years ago," he replied. "His mother, one of the noblest and most lovely women in the world, lives in that pretty cottage just there in the street

•
above. But you will not find her son at her house. They have been estranged for a long time, though there is a story that they have been seen together at Judge Tremwick's, whose beautiful home stands at the end of this street beyond those spreading live-oaks that you see."

I at once recalled the circumstance of Farrington's enforced and unhappy separation from those he loved by reason of the delusion of Ruth Wardleigh, but I said nothing to my friend. I thanked him, and we parted. Passing around into the next street, I soon stood before the cottage that he had pointed out. It was a lovely place, surrounded by a garden of plants and flowers. I recalled Lloyd Farrington's description of his home and happy days before the terrible tragedy which had ruined his life. I turned and looked over the intervening landscape to the bay which lay peacefully, with a silver sheen upon it, in the warm sunlight. Far out to the west, past Yerba Buena, past the hills along the northern shore line of the city, past Alcatraz, Black Point, the Presidio, and the opposite heights of Sausalito, the Golden Gate stretched away to the edge of the ocean mist that obscured the horizon. I thought that from

this point to see the sun set in the narrow strait must be beautiful indeed, as Farrington had said.

I rang at the gate, and was invited to enter by an elderly woman of quiet manners, who took my card and showed me into a room at the front of the house to the right of the central hall.

A bay-window on the south side, hung with heavy lace curtains, let the sunlight through the Venetian blinds, disclosing cosy, comfortable furniture, harmonizing in color with the warm tone of the room; a soft moquette carpet of a light hue and an intricate arabesque pattern; a single chandelier of crystal pendants cut in prisms which caught and reflected the light, and the whole of which was reproduced in the bevelled French mirror over the marble mantel; a couple of tall standing lamps covered with bright shades; a number of cheerful water colors of merit on the walls, which were covered with embossed paper of cream and gold; an upright piano with an embroidered cover; music and books in profusion, with numberless articles of vertu and artistic bric-à-brac, which marked the cottage as the home of a cultivated woman.

Mrs. Farrington entered. She met me with

a pleasant cordiality which assured me, and with a graceful motion bade me to a seat.

“ Though I have never had the honor, madam, of being presented to you,” said I, “ I feel that I know you. A few years ago I met your son Lloyd in Arizona under peculiar circumstances, and he told me the sad story of his life, as he called it; of course he had much to say of yourself.”

“ Then, Mr. Grafton, I bid you doubly welcome. My poor boy must have been very fond of you, because he is usually so reticent. Were he here now he would be delighted to see you, not only on account of his past acquaintance but also because of your great kindness yesterday in sending us a message which brought hope to this unhappy home,—hope that had flown.”

How sweetly sad that beautiful, pale face! Her eyes so like Lloyd’s, as I have said, were suffused with a mist just ready to condense. I looked at her inquiringly, for I did not know to what she referred.

“ Surely I am not mistaken; for that lovely girl, Miss Jordan, told me what occurred in your office and of your inquiry regarding us. As she said, she did not need that you should tell her

in so many words to come to us; the suggestion was quite clear and sufficient. Dear child, she came, and we straightway took her into our hearts,—Miss Ruth and I. You should have seen them together. It was a case of love at first sight.”

I tried to express my appreciation of her pleasant greeting, and then said,—

“I was anxious to see your son last night, and I rather expected him at the Palace Hotel, but he did not come. I thought that perhaps I might find him by coming over to Berkeley.”

A shadow flitted across her face which reminded me of Lloyd's self-imposed banishment, and I added,—

“I do not forget his story, but since he told it to me three years ago I did not know what change might have occurred. However, I now judge, from a remark made to me by an acquaintance of whom I asked the way to your house, that he is still separated from you and from the lady whom he called Ruth, and who is, I understand, the sister of the unfortunate young man, Luke Wardleigh. Still, I should have come to you anyway to learn of his whereabouts. For, though he may not be with you,

I am quite sure that you can always tell where he is."

"Ah, sir," she said, with a tender, motherly smile, "you are quite right. My dear boy is never out of my sight, in a sense that you will understand. Yes, I saw him less than an hour ago at my brother's, at whose house I called after church, but he has now gone to Oakland to remain with Luke until to-morrow. I doubt not that he will accompany him to court in the morning and you will see him there." She paused a moment, and then said in a sad tone, "My poor son! If he were not the bravest of the brave he would break down under this new sorrow. Except for an hour or two at mid-day he has not left the prison since Friday night. It happened that the jailer served under Lloyd at one time, and he allows him to remain with his friend."

I was deeply touched by this new evidence of Farrington's devotion. I could not trust myself to talk of him further. I simply said that it would answer to see him the next day, and requested her to send word to him in case it should not be his purpose to accompany Wardleigh. She said that she would telephone from her

brother's house to the jail, as Lloyd had arranged that she might do if she should wish to communicate with him.

"I presume, madam," said I, with some hesitation, "that you saw the account which appeared in the papers this morning of the serious illness of Mr. Walton, the postmaster at Melton, who is the brother-in-law, as I understand, of the young people in whom you and your son take so deep an interest?"

I had an object in asking this question, but I did it with much reluctance. I feared that it might appear to this woman, for whom I felt a profound respect, and to Lloyd when he should know of my inquiry, that I was intruding into family matters from mere curiosity. I hesitated the more when I reflected that from the views held by these people in regard to the Wardleigh case I had done them great injustice. However, I was conscious that I had not unwittingly done Luke Wardleigh any wrong, and I felt confident that neither Lloyd nor his friend nor Mrs. Farrington laid any blame upon me. If I had any doubt as to her feelings it was dispelled by the manner of her reply.

"Yes, sir, we saw the despatch in an evening

paper on Saturday and what appeared to be a reproduction of it in this morning's paper. Miss Ruth also received a telegram from Melton in reply to one sent to a friend to inquire as to Mr. Walton's condition. He is very low and but little hope of his recovery is entertained. Miss Wardleigh goes to Melton to-night. She is very anxious in regard to her sister. Luke will join her as soon as he is released."

This quite astonished me. Somehow I had only thought of Ruth Wardleigh as an unfortunate girl whose mind was seriously affected. My recollection of the brief sight of her in the commissioner's office, as I recalled the incident after I knew who she was, had not been calculated to dispel this notion; then the idea of her going to Melton disarranged my plan. My object in seeking Lloyd Farrington was to induce him to go to Melton to make certain investigations. What would be the consequence if he should meet Miss Wardleigh? I recalled the terrible scene, as described by Lloyd to me, when he saw her after the tragedy; I said nothing of this, however, to Mrs. Farrington.

"Does Miss Wardleigh travel alone?"

There must have been something of surprise

in my look or in the tone of my voice which disclosed to Mrs. Farrington what was passing in my mind in regard to Miss Wardleigh's condition.

"Yes, sir, she has gone to Melton quite a number of times by herself during the last two years, and particularly and more frequently during the past four months, since the illness of her sister Grace. Luke was away in Arizona for a long time, and recently he has been in Melton, as you know, so that he could escort her, though it was not necessary that he should do so." Then dropping her voice and turning her head slightly towards the door leading into the next room, Mrs. Farrington continued, "I judge that your idea of Miss Wardleigh is formed from Lloyd's account of the tragedy six years ago; but since her present physician and our dear friend Dr. Guthrie——"

"Dr. Guthrie?" I interrupted, much surprised; "he is my brother-in-law."

"Ah, indeed," she continued; "I am delighted to hear it. Well, as I was saying, he became her physician five years ago, and since then Ruth has——"

At that moment the door just mentioned

opened and a young and strikingly beautiful woman entered. She had a cloak upon her arm and a travelling-bag in her hand; she paused a moment as if she had not expected to see a stranger. I arose, and Mrs. Farrington presented me to Miss Wardleigh. I did not know what to expect; I was the acquaintance, and could almost claim to be the friend, of Lloyd Farrington. Yet, as I understood her mental state, she believed him to be the murderer of her parents. I knew her brother, but I had just prosecuted him to conviction on an indictment for a felony, and she without doubt believed him to be innocent. How, then, would she receive me? All this flashed through my mind while I bowed as I was presented. I concluded from her first words that she had at least thought of my unpleasant relations to her brother, for as I resumed my seat and she sat down by Mrs. Farrington she said,—

“You are not a stranger to us, Mr. Grafton;” she paused, and then her face brightened and she said, “it was but yesterday that the sweetest girl in all the land sang your praises to us.” She said this in such a pleasant, cordial way that I was embarrassed, and I showed it, I presume.

"At what time did the doctor say that he would come for me, dear?" said she, turning with a pretty caressing movement towards Mrs. Farrington.

"He did not name the hour, but said that he would come over with his team and drive you to the Sixteenth Street Station, Oakland, in time for the three o'clock train; he should be here in a short time."

During this brief conversation I had an opportunity to complete my observation of the graceful and lovely woman who came as a revelation to me. If I expected to see the girl afflicted with a mad delusion I was certainly disappointed. It is true that in the expression of her face when her features were at rest there was a profound sadness, but except this there was nothing about her to suggest the tragic story with which I was familiar. Of medium height, or slightly under, she was dressed in a closely-fitting travelling-gown of gray woollen stuff and a small pretty bonnet trimmed to harmonize with the suit. She wore no ornaments except a small gold fob, a neat pin at the throat in the form of a scroll, and two perfect pearls set to the lobes of her ears. I knew that

she was then about twenty-three. As she crossed the room there was that grace and ease in her movements which came from social culture. However, her form and bearing did not first attract me. It was her exquisitely beautiful face. A brunette, with dark-hazel eyes, and hair that would have been black but for the almost auburn tint that persisted when the sun shone upon it. Her features were cut in a delicate mould, but were not sharp. The strength of her face lay in the breadth of her forehead and in the depth and intellectual light of her lovely eyes. Altogether she was very beautiful. I could not help wondering whether Lloyd Farrington had seen her in all these years of their separation. I found myself hoping for his sake that he had not.

The door bell rang and Dr. Guthrie was announced.

Guthrie was not only my brother-in-law but my confidential friend. I shall hereafter have something to say of his professional skill and standing. In appearance he was not above five-and-thirty years of age, though his dark hair was quite sprinkled with gray. Of middle height, graceful, a high intellectual forehead,

strong features, a moustache as black as ink, and pleasant brown eyes, he was always sure to attract attention wherever he went. When he spoke, his voice, which was as soft as the tone of a harp, vibrated in a musical key.

"Why, Mark, how fortunate!" said he as he entered, greeting the ladies with a pleasant, familiar smile which showed that he felt quite at home. "I have been looking for you at the hotel. I left a note at the office saying that I would call to-night. This enables me to make sure that I shall see you, for as Jeanette is away, I did not know but that you might be off on one of your Sunday excursions."

"I am at your service, Harvey, now as ever," said I.

"It is always an agreeable surprise to find that our friends are friends of each other. It is doubly so to learn that they are not only friends, but near relations," said Mrs. Farrington, pleasantly, and Miss Ruth echoed the remark. The doctor did not sit down, which indicated that he thought it time to start, and so I took my leave, promising to meet him in the evening.

CHAPTER XII

DR. HARVEY GUTHRIE

HARVEY GUTHRIE was a physician and surgeon of rare skill, who had come to San Francisco from the East some ten years before and at once taken a leading position in the profession. A public-spirited and exemplary citizen, he was highly esteemed in the community.

While his practice was general he had an exceptional reputation in the treatment of diseases of the brain,—mental disorders. He was the author of a work on the “Curability of Certain Phases of Insanity,” which had already won him a reputation at home and in Europe. In this branch of medical science he stood at the head of the profession on the coast, and was frequently called to testify as an expert. It was thus that I first met him, some four years before, when he was a witness in the famous Nottingham Will Case. Many will still remember that remarkable litigation. Old Nottingham

died worth a quarter of a million. The fortune had come to him through the rise in value of lands which he had bought for a song in early days. He had never married, but had a widowed sister, who had cared for him through much sickness, and two lovely nieces, daughters of a deceased brother. Before his death he had been very eccentric and had constantly manifested a bitter hatred towards these relatives. He had a religious mania, withal, and lived in fear of hell. So, to propitiate the Almighty, as he declared, he left his entire fortune to a foreign mission society of the church which he attended. His legal heirs, his sister and nieces, were left destitute. In their behalf I contested the will. It was valid unless I could establish his insanity. I had the church influence against me. A half-score of physicians, in reply to the usual hypothetical questions, swore to his perfect sanity. I had a good deal of direct evidence as to his crazy antics, but I was woefully deficient in expert testimony. However, during the progress of the trial, which attracted public attention, Dr. Guthrie called upon me and made himself known. To my surprise and delight he informed me that for a year preceding Notting-

ham's death he had been studying his case as an instance of obscure mental disorder amounting in his judgment to insanity.

"Heavens," said I, "how unfortunate for these worthy ladies whom I represent! Having been the physician of the deceased, the law does not permit you to testify." His face flushed, and I saw that I had offended him.

"You are mistaken, sir, in your supposition. I was not Mr. Nottingham's physician, or I should not have been here. I was never consulted by him. My study was purely in the interest of my science."

"I beg a thousand pardons!" I exclaimed. "I was so absorbed in this suit that I did not stop to think."

He knew that I was sincere, and we became fast friends. He saved my case. His evidence was most interesting and conclusive. He spoke, not hypothetically, but from close, persistent observation. He carried conviction. Then when I came to argue the matter I had the advantage of his splendid library and his discriminating selection of illustrative cases. The will was set aside and the heirs inherited,—the sister one-half and the nieces the other. The aunt after-

wards died and the two girls succeeded to the whole property.

I have mentioned these particulars not because of their particular bearing on the story I am relating, but to bring the character and skill of Dr. Guthrie into relief. And, too, I wish to emphasize my obligations to him. I was a confirmed bachelor four years ago, and now I have the most devoted and lovely wife in the world. She was Jeanette Nottingham.

"What," said my wife, when I read the first draft of this chapter over to her, "do you mean to say that you would not have married me if Dr. Guthrie had not made it possible for you to win our case?" Her temper began to rise a little as she added with considerable asperity, "Well, whatever motive you had, I surely did not marry you for your fortune." I was a little embarrassed at first, but I replied cautiously,—

"I certainly did not mean to convey any such idea. I meant that if I had lost the case you would not have married me."

"I believe that you are right," she admitted. "If you had let those people defeat us I should have had no confidence in nor respect for you, and I should not have loved you. Though love

may continue—persist, after confidence and respect have ceased, I doubt if it ever arises where there is already a lack of respect and a want of confidence.” How much further this discussion might have continued I do not know had not baby Mark, who had been asleep in the adjoining room, just then awakened and compelled his mother to come to him.

Through me Dr. Guthrie met Jeanette’s sister Marie, a splendid little woman; they loved and married. It was thus that our relationship had been brought about.

In the evening Dr. Guthrie came to the hotel and to my room, where I was alone. I did not see him Friday night when he arrived from the East, where he had been to attend the annual meeting of the National Medical Society. On Saturday I had seen him for a few moments at the Bohemian Club. I had not the faintest suspicion that he knew the people in whom I had lately become so interested.

“Well, Harvey, did you see your patient safely off?” I inquired by way of introduction to the subject which he had come to discuss, as I thought.

“Oh, yes; she is a good traveller and will be

safely at Melton at an early hour to-night; she will have friends to meet her."

"How odd," said I, handing him a cigar, "that I should have known the strange story of this girl for three years, during which time you have been her physician, and yet you did not know that I had heard of her and I did not know that you knew her! After all, it is not so strange, for I only heard the story from Lloyd Farrington as a personal reminiscence during a night's ride on a stage, and had all but forgotten it until I saw him again a few days ago."

"Poor Lloyd! The mention of his name almost brings the tears to my eyes," mused the doctor, as he leaned back in his chair and sent a whiff of blue smoke curling upward.

"Oh, you know Farrington, then?" I inquired.

"Of course," said he. "I am his mother's physician, and for five years, with his knowledge, I have attended Ruth Wardleigh, who, after his mother, is all the world to him. However, having made that statement in connection with the use of his name, I should add that my charges have always been paid by her brother Luke. They have not been very large." After

a pause of some minutes, in which we smoked and were doubtless both wool-gathering, he said, abruptly, "It was concerning young Wardleigh that I sought to see you to-day and that I am here to-night."

I confess that I was disappointed. I don't know why, but somehow I thought that he wanted to talk to me about his patient; I assumed as much when I introduced the conversation regarding her, but I said nothing.

"When I went East," he continued, "a month ago, I had heard nothing of his troubles, if indeed they had begun. I returned Friday night, as you know, but until yesterday I had no idea that you had consigned poor Luke to jail. At lunch Marie asked me if I knew the first name of young Wardleigh, of whom I had spoken in talking of his sister's strange case. When I told her, she brought me the papers containing the account of the trial, which she had saved, and I saw that a second terrible calamity had fallen upon the members of these two families in whom I have taken so deep an interest. I immediately started for Berkeley. I had reasons for entertaining the most serious apprehensions. I dreaded beyond expression to see

my patient. I did not know but that I might find her demented,—I almost expected it. Judge of my delight when I found her in perfect health and her mind unaffected.”

“But was she not deeply distressed by her brother’s disgrace?” I asked. “I saw her for a few moments when he was arrested. She came to the commissioner’s office accompanied by Mrs. Farrington and Judge Tremwick, and though she was veiled she appeared to be greatly excited and grieved.”

“Yes,” replied the doctor, “I was told of that circumstance, and I see now that that terrible morning after she saw the account of Luke’s arrest in the papers was the critical time with her. It was careless on the part of Luke to have allowed her to be shocked in that way. But he relied upon Kenton to keep the fact of his arrest out of the papers until he could see her or communicate with her. However, from that day, it seems, she recovered her spirits, and up to the time of Luke’s conviction on Friday she rested in the confidence which he and Kenton had inspired, that Luke would be triumphantly vindicated. Even after the verdict, though she was much affected and greatly wor-

ried, still her perfect confidence in Luke remained, and her buoyant hopeful nature carried her through the crisis. While I was there yesterday, for I remained quite late, a young lady, Miss Jordan, came from you with a message of hope."

"Well, hardly that," said I; "I sent no message at all. I simply inquired if she knew Miss Wardleigh and Mrs. Farrington. Of course I intended to suggest that she should see them and convey the information, which I had given her, that I would not move for sentence upon Luke Wardleigh to-morrow. It seems that she went further than I intended."

"I don't know about that, Mark; I rather think that you meant all that she said." He laughed in his soft, musical way at the turn he had given the expression, and continued, "This brings me again to the object of my visit to you. It was to tell you that I am morally certain that young Wardleigh is entirely innocent of the charge brought against him and upon which you have convicted him."

"My dear Harvey," said I, with a laugh that I intended to appear cynical, "your assurance is only equalled by that of Miss Edith Jordan,

who is in love with him, I imagine. Your logic is not unlike hers. Why, what do you know about the case? The evidence against him was overwhelming."

"Oh, I don't care for your evidence," he interrupted, irreverently. "If you will remember, the good church people had produced overwhelming evidence of the sanity of our late respected Uncle-in-law Rufus Nottingham until we put our heads together, which is what I propose to do now." He paused for a little time, and then continued, in a voice thrilling and vibrant, "Let us save an innocent man from prison and Lloyd Farrington, his mother, and Miss Wardleigh from despair. Nay, more: save Miss Ruth from insanity." He ceased. I was too deeply affected by what he had said and by the thoughts which were suggested by his words to speak. Presently he continued, "You asked me a moment ago what I know about the Wardleigh case. Nothing, as you lawyers estimate proof, since what I know is merely hearsay. But let me ask you, What do you know about it? You say that the evidence against Wardleigh was overwhelming. What kind of evidence? Circumstantial, if I read the news-

paper accounts correctly. Yet circumstances are great liars, at least when taken singly, or even in pairs. I believe that I heard you say in your argument when you defended and secured the acquittal of Barclay Johnson, just before you became United States attorney (I was a witness, you will remember, to show that his wife might not have died of poison), 'that in order to convict on circumstantial evidence not only must every fact proven be consistent with the theory of the guilt of the accused, but also inconsistent with every possible theory of innocence.' Very well. Let us apply that rule to this case. I offer you a fact—two facts—absolutely inconsistent with the theory of Luke Wardleigh's guilt."

"All right, my dear doctor," said I; "what are your facts?"

"First, Luke Wardleigh's character; second, his assurance to his sister and to his friend Lloyd Farrington, to neither of whom did he ever tell a lie, that he did not commit the crime." I laughed, but not in a way to offend him.

"My dear boy," said I, assuming a fatherly tone, for I could not allow him to instruct me in my profession, "the law would have small

chance if the word of the accused or his good character could be allowed to outweigh all of the evidence against him. Of course character is a fact to be taken into consideration by the jury; and the defendant (whether wisely I question) is allowed to testify in his own behalf. All such evidence, however, must be scrutinized and weighed with——”

“Oh, bother!” said my brother-in-law, with that familiarity which he seemed to think his relationship warranted. “I don’t care a penny-weight of pellets for your rules of evidence;” forgetting that he had just attempted to convince me by applying one that he had crudely quoted from one of my arguments. However, I laughed good-naturedly and said,—

“Harvey, I won’t comment on your inconsistency, but I will suggest that you would do better to follow Miss Edith Jordan’s theory.”

“What is that?” he inquired, showing an immediate and keen interest.

I then related to him all that had occurred the day before when Miss Jordan and her father called at my office.

“Why, of course,” said he, jumping up excitedly, “it is as plain as a carbuncle. That

little girl's intuition is worth more than all of Pinkerton's detectives. And now, my dear Mark, tell me what you are going to do."

"I am going to institute an investigation," said I.

"Investigation! Why, what do you want to investigate?" said he, with astonishment and disgust.

I explained; and he cooled down a good deal and seemed to have a little more respect for my legal sense, so to speak.

"Well," said he, "assuming that it all comes out as I confidently expect and as you earnestly hope, what then?"

I made a further explanation, which was in the nature of a promise as well to myself as to him. When I had finished he sat perfectly quiet for a time, and I could see by the lines of intense concentration on his face that he was trying to solve some difficult problem. I waited. He suddenly glanced up, and I saw in his eyes, which shone with the fire of genius, suppressed excitement and a look of joy and triumph. He was still silent. I grew anxious,—impatient.

"What is it?" I asked, disconnectedly

"I have found the solution that I have sought

for five years," he replied, in a low deliberate tone that sounded like the vibration of a musical reed, and which thrilled me. "I will now be able to restore Ruth Wardleigh to her normal mental state; to cure her absolutely. Think, Mark, think what it means to two lives,—to two souls. You know something of Lloyd Farrington's agony and despair; it is not half the story. Ruth Wardleigh has never ceased to love him, though her mind, at least in her waking state, is now blank as to his existence. I must tell you the whole of my strange experience while studying this remarkable case."

I became intently interested and prepared to listen, but rising, he said,—

"Not to-night; I want to think. When does Jeanette return from Santa Barbara?"

I was disappointed, but I knew him too well to insist; I answered his question without allowing him to see my chagrin,—

"She will return the day after to-morrow. I had a wire yesterday."

"Dine with Marie and me to-morrow, and as she is going with some friends to hear a lecture, we can have the evening to ourselves."

"Very well," said I. Then he bade me good-night and withdrew.

CHAPTER XIII

IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH

AFTER the doctor left—it was about half-past ten—I tried to read, but could not bring my thoughts to the book. The incidents which had crowded into the past forty-eight hours, in connection with Luke Wardleigh's conviction and the renewal of my acquaintance with Farrington, kept coming up before me. Farrington's appeal to me and my refusal of his request; his passionate assertion that Wardleigh was guiltless; my learning of the identity of the prisoner with the brave fellow who had saved Farrington's life; our adventure Friday night; my investigation and interview with the Jordans; my visit to Berkeley and surprise at the appearance of Ruth Wardleigh, and now Guthrie's mysterious talk. I was fairly bewildered. I must have sat an hour thinking it over in a confused way when a call-boy knocked and brought me a card. It bore the name of Lloyd Farrington. A few moments later he entered. He returned my salutation in a manner that showed that he

was pleased, but there was an anxious, worried look on his face,—something more than his habitual sadness. He did not sit down, though I had urged him to do so.

“My mother,” said he, “telephoned me from my uncle’s that you were over and looking for me, and that you would expect to see me at court to-morrow. I would not have disturbed you to-night but for an occurrence of great importance. She also said that you had met Dr. Guthrie and that he was to see you to-night. I thought to find him here.”

“He left about an hour ago,” said I, “and has gone home. It is quite a distance out to his house, and if you wish to talk to him you will find a telephone in the room across the alcove. Mrs. Grafton is away and you will not disturb any one.”

He hesitated a moment, and then said, “Do you know that I had quite forgotten until this evening that you and Dr. Guthrie are married to sisters, although I now remember to have read a little romance concerning you,—the story of the Nottingham will. Excuse my referring to the matter; I do so only to ask you whether the doctor has talked to you about Miss Wardleigh’s

condition,—mental condition?" He still stood, which led me to think that his inquiry had some relation to the object of his search for the doctor that night.

"Curiously enough," I replied, "and I remarked the fact while talking with the doctor an hour or so ago, I did not know that he was her physician or that he knew you until to-day at your mother's; still, it is not strange, for though our social and personal relations are so close, our professional lines trend in almost opposite directions. This evening," I continued, "we had a most interesting conversation regarding the matter of which you speak; he knew that you had told me the painfully sad origin of her mental disorder." I paused; we were both silent for a moment. I was thinking whether I ought to tell him that Guthrie had said that he saw the possibility of effecting a permanent cure,—of restoring to him the woman he loved so faithfully, so tenderly, and so passionately. But I said to myself that however much I might like to fill his heart with this new hope, I had no right to divulge the doctor's confidential communication to me; and then I remembered that he had uttered the exclamation in connection

with something that he thought I might be able to do in the Wardleigh case,—perhaps all that might fail. I concluded to say nothing to him about Harvey's vague suggestion. These thoughts occupied but an instant, when Lloyd said, abruptly, as if he had suddenly come to a conclusion,—

“ Mr. Grafton, I feel as if I ought to lay this matter before you.” As he said this he took a telegram from his pocket. “ I must also of course communicate with Dr. Guthrie, since it involves the sanity, the life, perhaps, of one whom he is attending professionally and who is more to me than my own life. I feel, sir, that you are my friend. You have become so intimately connected with the strange drama now so rapidly moving to a crisis that I would not be justified in acting towards you with reserve.” He threw off his overcoat, laid aside his hat, and sat down in the chair which I had offered him. I took the message which he handed me and read it. It was dated at Melton and appeared to have been received at Oakland at half-past nine that evening. It was addressed to Luke Wardleigh at the county jail, and informed him that Robert Walton had died at

seven o'clock; that his sister, Mrs. Walton, was very weak, and that the sender would meet Miss Ruth at the train. It was signed, "J. T. Willis, M.D."

"My God!" I exclaimed, excitedly rising. "If I could only obtain the release of your unfortunate friend to-night he might take the early train and be with his sisters in the morning; but I am powerless. The order to admit him to bail after conviction can be made only in open court."

"I understand that quite well," said Lloyd, sadly, "and so does Luke. He does not expect it. He is brave and patient,—as he well needs to be. Think of it, dear sir; his twin sister, whom he loves with an affection born of that relation, lying dangerously ill, with the shadow of death hanging over her; his elder sister, whom he also loves devotedly, who was once driven partially insane by a terrible grief precipitated by an overwhelming tragedy, about to enter the stricken home, perhaps to be prostrated, shattered in mind again. Merciful God!" he exclaimed, while the tears fell from his eyes and I myself was scarcely less affected. "My own sorrow is greater, almost greater than I can bear, but it sinks into insignificance beside the

anguish of my poor friend." He paused a moment, then turning to me, he added with manly dignity, "I do not hesitate, Mr. Grafton, to ask you for advice. My mind is clouded and I cannot see clearly." Thus appealed to by this young man whom I respected and esteemed so highly, I at once pulled myself together, and after a moment's reflection said,—

"Your first impulse to see Dr. Guthrie was correct. Call him up and talk with him at once and then I will consider with you what we will do, subject to his approval."

I stepped across the alcove with him, lighted the gas, and, going to the telephone, switched to the doctor's private wire and rang him up. This cut the "central" out and gave absolute privacy.

"Hello! Harvey, is that you?"

"Yes, Mark; anything the matter?"

"No, at least not with me. Lloyd Farrington is over. He has some important news and wants to talk with you."

"Good. I have something important, too. I was thinking of trying to get him in Oakland. Tell him to come to the 'phone."

"He says," said I, turning to Farrington,

"that he has news for you, and I judge from the tone of his voice that it is not bad news."

I handed him the receiver and was about to leave the room, when he said that he had no secrets from me and asked me to remain. He placed the receiver to his ear and an amused smile flitted for a moment across his face.

"I must have talked close to the transmitter," he remarked, "for he heard me. He says that you are to hear everything."

There was then a long and earnest conversation over the wire, and when they had finished and the connection was cut off, we returned to the room in which we had been sitting. I offered Lloyd a cigar, which he took and lighted mechanically. He had a far-away look, but it was less anxious.

"Dr. Guthrie is wonderfully thoughtful," said he, seating himself. I assented, though I did not see the connection until he continued, "It seems that he wrote Dr. Willis, whom he knows and in whom he has confidence, last night, telling him of Ruth's condition and instructing him specifically what to do should Mr. Walton die before her arrival. He had just received a full telegraphic report from Willis, which he read

to me over the wire. Mrs. Walton had rallied somewhat, and there is no immediate danger of her death. Ruth arrived and Willis met her. She was informed, in the manner directed by Dr. Guthrie, and while she was deeply grieved there was no paroxysm. The doctor is now well satisfied that the danger is past, and that there will be no ill effects. A weight as of stone is lifted from my heart." He sighed as if it were literally so.

"And now, Farrington," said I, "as this anxiety is removed, suppose that we talk a moment about another matter."

"I am at your service," he replied.

"You will pardon my asking you," I continued, "if there is any objection to your going to Melton to-morrow, now that Miss Wardleigh is there?" The profoundly sad expression which I had so often noticed came over his face. He did not answer me at once and seemed to be recalling some scene in the past.

"I understand your inquiry to be," said he, "whether there would be any danger to Miss Wardleigh if I should meet her? I do not know, but I think not. However, I should be guided by the advice and instructions of Dr. Guthrie."

"Oh, certainly," said I. "I should not think of asking you to do anything that might affect his patient without consulting him. Suppose that I call him up again so that you can inquire?"

"Very well," he assented; "but first tell me what you wish me to do at Melton?"

I then went over certain phases of the Wardleigh case and explained to him the importance of ascertaining some additional facts. This investigation I was anxious that he should undertake for two reasons: being a special agent of the department of justice, I felt that he could act officially; and as the friend of Wardleigh, I knew that he would pursue the matter with energy and celerity. He became interested and enthusiastic at once, and said that he would go on the first train in the morning unless Dr. Guthrie saw some objection. "Really," said he, after reflecting a moment, "I think that there is very little probability of my meeting Ruth. I shall have no occasion to go where she will be. I did not know Walton, and Mrs. Walton is too ill to permit my calling on her. I should not go to the funeral."

"Pardon me the suggestion," said I, "that

you should pursue the inquiries which you are to make entirely independent of Luke Wardleigh and without his knowledge. I may wish to call you as a witness, and in that event it will look better if you appear to have acted without any understanding with him."

"Most assuredly," said he. "And since you wish me to go in my official capacity, I will not consult the doctor nor even allow Luke to know that I am there. I will go in disguise, so that no one in Melton will know me unless I disclose my identity. My experience with mail robbers in New Mexico and Arizona will avail me."

"Capital!" I exclaimed. "It will prevent all complications. Come to me as soon as you return."

He arose and looked at his watch, which caused me to glance at the clock. It was past midnight.

"I must be off," said he, "for I promised Luke to return. He will be anxious to hear Dr. Guthrie's conclusion in regard to Ruth. He will be doubly relieved when I inform him of Dr. Willis's report as to the condition of his sister Grace."

"I am afraid the last boat has gone," I an-

swered, feeling some anxiety and considerable annoyance that I should have thoughtlessly detained him so long.

"Oh, that is all right. I have acquired the habit of providing against contingencies. When I came over, thinking that I might be detained, I hired a boat with two men to take me back. It is a bright night and the moon is full. It is not as bright, however, as that night when we rode together from Tombstone to Benson."

"No," I assented, "and it is not likely that either of us will ever again witness such splendor. By the bye," I added, "have you heard or seen anything of that scoundrel and murderer Clanton? I have been wanting to ask you all the evening, but the affair of your friend has been so absorbing that the other matter has been constantly pushed aside."

"No," he replied, "I have not heard anything of him. I telephoned fully to police headquarters Friday night and again Saturday. I also communicated with the marshal's office. The trains and vessels are being closely watched, and it is only a matter of time when he will be caught."

He put on his overcoat, after carefully exam-

ining a silver and ivory mounted revolver which I recognized as one of the brace he wore in Arizona.

Those two fellows whom I engaged to row me over to-night had a piratical look, and as I shall be master of the craft for the time being, I might as well be ready to enforce obedience." He said this in that mild, soft voice which I have noticed is so often associated with absolute fearlessness. He bade me good-night more cheerfully and with less anxiety on his face than when he came in.

CHAPTER XIV

WARDLEIGH IS BAILED

THE next morning I sent a note to Archibald Kenton requesting him to call upon me at my office before court should open. He came at once.

The death of Robert Walton had caused me to change my plans somewhat. I had arranged with Kenton on Saturday that he should present a motion for a new trial on that morning, and I had agreed to ask the court to continue the hearing of the motion for a week and to consent that Wardleigh might be admitted to bail in the mean time.

"Kenton," said I, when he came in, "have you heard that one of your witnesses in the Wardleigh case is dead?"

"No," said he, quickly and anxiously; "which one?"

"Robert Walton," I replied.

It would be hard for me to describe the look that swept over Kenton's face as I uttered the

name of the postmaster of Melton. I thought that I detected satisfaction mingled with surprise; but I must have been mistaken. He said nothing except to ask how I received the news. I told him that I had seen a telegram from a gentleman there to a friend of mine.

"If a new trial should be granted," said I, tentatively, "I suppose that we would be entitled to have the testimony of Walton at the recent trial read to the jury?"

"That would be the practice in the State courts; I suppose that you would follow it," replied Kenton.

"I think so," said I.

I then told Kenton that if he would present his motion for a new trial simply on the general ground of the insufficiency of the evidence to sustain the verdict, I would myself ask the court to grant the motion at once, and would, if necessary, give such reasons as would without doubt induce the judge to do so.

Kenton was naturally much surprised. He was very grateful, and so expressed himself. I entered into no explanation, but said that I would exact the condition that he should not object to my setting the case for trial again a week

from that day. This seemed to cut him up a little, but he acquiesced.

When I entered the court-room the judge had not arrived. I looked around and saw that the jurors were in attendance, one of my assistants having a criminal case for trial. The marshal had brought Wardleigh in. He looked comparatively cheerful. I saw him glance around and bow to Judge Tremwick with an expression of pleased gratitude. Then he looked further, and his eyes fell upon the Rev. Mr. Jordan. I thought that he seemed slightly disappointed, perhaps at seeing him alone; it may have been only my fancy. Just then Kenton, who sat by him, spoke to him, and he turned his face away. There were a few spectators. As I passed to my seat I stopped and shook hands with Mr. Jordan, after greeting Judge Tremwick and one or two other attorneys who were in attendance upon other matters.

"My daughter Edith and I," said he, with delightful frankness, "feel so deeply interested in young Mr. Wardleigh that I came over to see what would be done in his case."

"I think that you will be agreeably surprised," said I, mysteriously. Then without giving him

a chance to make inquiry of me I continued, "I trust that you left your daughter quite well?"

"Thank you, sir, but no," he answered; "she is nervous and restless, and I am afraid that she is threatened with illness." There was an expression of tender anxiety in his voice and a suggestion of moisture in his eyes.

"I hope that she will soon be better," I responded cheerfully, and with what I intended to be a knowing and superior smile. He did not seem to notice it. I was about to remark to myself upon the obtuseness of the fathers of lovely and susceptible girls, when the judge entered and the court was opened.

The name of Luke Wardleigh was called, the clerk adding the words, "for sentence." Luke arose and stood with quiet dignity. I afterwards learned that Kenton had not prepared him for what was to follow; but he knew that he was not to be sentenced.

"Luke Wardleigh," said the clerk, monotonously, "you have been tried and convicted by a jury of your countrymen selected by yourself upon an indictment charging you with a violation of the postal laws of the United States;

have you anything to offer why the sentence of the law should not be pronounced upon you?"

There was the usual dead silence. Kenton stepped to the bar, and after telling Wardleigh to be seated, said that he wished to present a motion for a new trial. He then read the motion. The judge looked towards me inquiringly, evidently expecting me to ask for a postponement. I arose and addressed the court:

"May it please your Honor: I desire now, on behalf of the United States, to consent that a new trial in this case may be granted."

I always had a fancy for startling scenes of this kind and I enjoyed the sensation that my words created. The jurors who had tried Wardleigh had gathered forward to hear sentence pronounced. They looked surprised and craned their necks to hear what was to follow. The clerk glanced at me with blank amazement, such a thing, as he afterwards said, had never occurred in his experience. Major Anderson, the chief inspector, had entered just before I arose and had taken a seat so that I could see his face. He heard my words, and immediately looked up with astonishment and indignation depicted on his earnest and honest countenance.

I had debated with myself whether I ought not advise the major before taking this step, but I knew that I would most likely meet opposition from him, and as I intended to pursue the course I had determined upon anyway, I concluded that it would be less disagreeable to explain the matter afterwards. These observations were all the result of an instant glance towards those near me. The judge's face indicated the most marked surprise.

"Mr. District Attorney," said he, addressing me by the title usually applied to United States attorneys for judicial districts, "your offer on the part of the government to consent to a new trial in this case is, under the circumstances, certainly unusual. I had understood in a general way that there were some reasons why it might be proper to postpone sentence upon the prisoner for a limited time, but I had not expected this course. I cannot overlook the fact that for several days the time of the court and of the jurors empanelled in the case were taken up in the trial. The defendant was convicted without any apparent hesitation or doubt on the part of the jury. It is true they recommended him to the mercy of the court, but such recom-

mendations are never construed as implying doubt of the guilt of the prisoner. I recognize to the fullest extent the authority of the attorney for the United States to control prosecutions, and under our practice, which in this case differs from the procedure in the State courts, I always grant the motion of the district attorney to enter a *nolle prosequi*—a dismissal—of an indictment or information. Yet, after a person is convicted, the matter is no longer under the exclusive control of the prosecuting officer.”

He paused a moment as if to reflect, and then, seeming to consider that he might have gone too far in what appeared as a reproof of my action, he added, “I have no doubt, Mr. District Attorney, from my knowledge of the conscientious and painstaking way that you have ever discharged your public duties, that you have good and sufficient reasons for the course you have taken. In order, however, that an improper precedent may not be set, I think it would be well for you to state your reasons. Perhaps such a statement ought not to be made in the presence of the jurors who may be called to try the accused in the event that a new trial should be granted. Of that you must judge. If you

wish it I will direct that the jurors withdraw."

"I thank your Honor," said I, "for your pleasant and kind words of commendation. I entirely agree with the court as to the propriety of my giving some specific reasons for my course. I shall do so. What I have to say may properly be said in the presence of the jury. It cannot prejudice the defendant nor will it embarrass the government. Your Honor will remember," I continued, "that the prisoner was found guilty upon evidence which was entirely circumstantial. Since the trial events have occurred which have led me to re-examine the evidence in my hands, and I have become aware of a fact, not proven, through inadvertence, but known to me officially, which, unexplained, is entirely inconsistent with the theory upon which the accused was convicted. With this knowledge in my possession I do not feel that I would be justified in moving for sentence upon the prisoner. Besides, were this fact known to the defendant's counsel, and should he present it in a motion for a new trial, I have no doubt that your Honor would at once set aside the verdict. Under these circumstances

I have felt it to be my duty to adopt the course I have just taken."

"Your statement is quite sufficient," said the judge. "I do not see how you could have properly done otherwise. I do not deem it incumbent upon me to require you to disclose the evidence to which you have adverted. It is sufficient that as the representative of the United States you state that from the facts within your knowledge the verdict should be set aside. Mr. Clerk, you will enter an order granting the defendant's motion for a new trial, adding the words 'the United States attorney consenting thereto.' Now, Mr. Attorney, what further action do you desire to take in the case?"

"I wish to set the case for trial again one week from to-day, if defendant's counsel has no objections to offer."

"I presume," said Kenton, in a rather dissatisfied tone, "that I can have my witnesses here at that time, and I do not object."

"Let it be so ordered," said the judge.

Mr. Kenton then moved that the defendant be admitted to bail, and the motion was granted as a matter of course. The amount of bail was

fixed at fifteen thousand dollars at my suggestion.

Judge Tremwick, who with his merchant friend was about to proceed to the clerk's office to sign the bond, paused to speak to me.

"Entirely aside from my interest in this young man, Mr. Grafton," said he, "and as a matter purely of professional and official propriety, I desire to compliment you on your action this morning."

I thanked him.

CHAPTER XV

THE THIRD AND LAST TIME

'As I was passing out of the court-room a stranger, who appeared to have been sitting among the spectators, stepped up and was about to speak to me; just then Major Anderson approached, and I asked him to meet me after luncheon. I then went on; the stranger followed, and in the corridor came up with me.

"I beg your parding, sir," said he, in a flat, nasal tone, "air you the deestrick attorney?" He was rather tall, but stooped a little; had sandy hair, a heavy tuft of whiskers of the same color on his chin, and wore a pair of green spectacles. He was dressed in an ill-fitting butter-nut suit and carried a small bag,—a veritable carpet-bag.

"Yes, sir," I replied, "I am the United States attorney; what is it?"

"Nuthin' perticular; I only wanted to say a word abeaout my land case."

"I think that you had better talk to one of my

assistants. The clerk in the main office will see that you are attended to." I was about to walk away. There was no one near.

"It is you that I desire to see." The words fell upon my ear in a soft tone which I recognized.

"Very well," said I; "let us step into my office." We did so; I closed the door and Farrington, for it was he, took off his glasses.

"Admirable," said I. "I should not have known you had you not spoken in your natural voice. So you did not get off this morning?"

"No," he replied; "I was prevented by an unexpected adventure, of which I will tell you. But first I want to express my thanks for what you have just done. It was entirely unexpected to me and to Luke. I am glad now that I did not get off, and it will make no difference, for I will be in Melton in time to commence work to-morrow morning. I will go up on the train with Luke, but he will not know that I am aboard."

"I hardly think that even he would recognize you," said I.

"Perhaps not, unless his attention should be particularly called to me. I passed him twice

in the corridor and he did not suspect my identity."

"What was your adventure?" I inquired.

"Quite strange, stirring, and satisfactory," he replied. "When I left you last night I took a coupé and drove to the ferry-landing. I had engaged a boat, as I told you, to be in the slip south of the Clay Street wharf. I discharged my hack at the foot of Market Street and started to walk to that point. I had some two hundred yards to go. I had proceeded but a short distance when I had the same strange and uncanny experience which I described to you Friday night. I *felt* that I heard a voice. Does that expression convey a meaning to you?"

"I think I understand you," I replied, very much interested. "At any rate, I recall what you told me before Clanton attacked you the other night."

"That reminds me, Mr. Grafton," said Lloyd, "that in my hurry to catch the departing boat after Clanton gave us the slip I did not have time to fully thank you." He added some pleasant but entirely unnecessary remarks about my presence of mind and all that. I insisted that his own coolness put mine to shame, which was

quite true. I was so interested, however, in his account of his later experience that I was anxious to direct his attention to the story, and I did so. — He thereupon continued his narrative:

“The words which I seemed to hear, and yet did not hear,—which seemed to be impressed upon my consciousness as I imagine a melody would be presented to a man entirely deaf,—the words that I heard, or rather apprehended in the sense I have described, were these: ‘Oh, sir, be careful! The boatmen have some frightful plan to harm you. There is a strange-looking man with them who has been leading them to it.’ It was the voice of Ruth Wardleigh. I was all but overpowered with emotion, as you can understand, Mr. Grafton.”

He was silent for a while, and I did not care to interrupt his reflections, though, as may be imagined, I was intensely interested and curious.

“Mr. Grafton,” said he presently, mastering himself, “you know something of my sad story, but much has occurred since I told you of the tragedy that wrecked my life,—much that I do not understand and concerning which I have

suffered, God knows how much. I should like to relate it all to you, but I am not equal to the task. My dear and wonderfully talented friend, Dr. Guthrie, who, as I am happy to learn, is also your friend and relative, knows it all. I beg you to ask him in my name to tell you all. He will do so. It must be sufficient now for me to say I believe Miss Wardleigh did speak to me, though she was not there."

To say that I was astonished conveys no idea of the depth of the impression made upon my mind and heart by Farrington's assertions. I said nothing, however, and presently Farrington continued:

"This warning was more real to me than the one I received Friday night, though not so startling. In the mean time, with the strange knowledge in my possession of which you will learn from Dr. Guthrie, I had by reflection come to accept the possibility that Miss Wardleigh had actually spoken to me in some mysterious and inexplicable way. My first impulse, therefore, was to endeavor to learn the true situation without being discovered myself.

"A small building, ten by ten perhaps, used as a ticket-office for one of the ferry lines, stood

between me and the slip where I had directed the boat to await me. I kept this structure in range, and approached without being seen. As I did so I saw the two men whom I had employed sitting on the wooden steps to which the yawl was moored, and sure enough there was a third person with them. I was so impressed with the reality of the warning words I had just heard that I looked at the other man, half expecting to see Rolla Clanton. It was apparently not he; I saw a man with heavy whiskers and a peculiar, pallid, death-like color. I was now close enough to hear their conversation, although they spoke in low, cautious tones.

“ ‘It’s time the bloke was comin’,’ said one of the two boatmen.

“ ‘He’ll soon be here,’ exclaimed the other.

“ ‘How d’ye think he’ll take to the new passenger?’ asked the first.

“ ‘I don’t know nor care if we once get ’im in the yawl. We’ll just say he’s a friend that lives on t’other side an’ missed the ferry. A gentleman certainly won’t object to a couple of poor men makin’ an extra dollar.’ The scoundrel said this with a whine, and his companion laughed a little.

“ ‘Are you dead sure you can make him put up and not come back on us?’ asked the second boatman, turning to the third man, who had not spoken yet. ‘Your story is a little fishy an’ I’m not sure I understand ye or like the job. If it warn’t for the big yaller boy you tipped us I’d throw up the whole business.’

“ ‘Never you mind,’ said the new-comer, speaking in a low, tense voice. ‘I know what I am at. The fellow is running away with valuable papers and bonds from a bank. He has plenty of money in greenbacks and he will give it up to get away.’

“ ‘But suppose he shows fight?’ growled the other boatman.

“ ‘No danger,’ was the answer; ‘bank thieves are always cowards. Besides,’ he added fiercely,—‘besides, if he makes any trouble I’ll settle accounts with him when we get out into the bay, and I’ll make a fair division of profits with you fellows.’

“ ‘You can well imagine, Mr. Grafton,’ said Farrington, ‘that my blood was boiling by this time. Had I known at that moment that the villain who was clearly planning to take my life was none other than Clanton——’”

"What!" I exclaimed, "it was Clanton then, after all?"

"Yes," said Lloyd, with calm satisfaction, looking at his watch, "and you will have an opportunity to renew your acquaintance with him in a few moments; the police are to bring him to the marshal's office at twelve o'clock."

"How, then, did you capture him?" I inquired, with deep interest.

"Not without much difficulty," replied he, "but it was done, and without shedding blood, though it was a close call. I felt at the time that I would like to have it out with the scoundrels then and there, or in the boat on the bay, for that matter. Had I known that I was listening to Clanton I would have tried to take him without waiting, though it would have been a difficult task. However, I concluded after a moment's reflection that my duty to Luke, not to speak of other matters of infinite concern to me, should preclude my taking any chances.

"I therefore retreated without being seen or heard and went to the station of the harbor patrol which was near by. I found Sergeant Squires on duty, and told him that I had made arrangements to be rowed across the bay, but

that I had been warned that the boatmen whom I had employed intended some treachery. He asked me to describe them, which I did from my recollection of their appearance early in the evening. The sergeant at once recognized them as members of a gang of wharf thieves. The other man he knew nothing about; I did not relate the conversation I had heard.

“We arranged a plan at once. He was to take three of his men and make his way to a point within hailing distance of the place from which I had listened to them. I was then to go down openly, and upon finding a third man I was to refuse to go in the boat. Further developments were to be left to the occasion. The plan was carried out,” continued Farrington, “but I was hardly prepared for the surprise to which I was subjected. I reached the steps and affected to be dissatisfied and angry that there should be any one else to cross the bay with me. The appeal was made that I had heard before; I was obdurate. While this talk was going on, Clanton, for it was he, as I have said, though I did not recognize him, stepped quickly to the wharf. I kept my eyes upon him. Suddenly he made a suspicious movement to get me be-

tween him and the men, who had also come up; as he did so I caught a clear glimpse of his face by moonlight, and I saw that the upper part was daubed over with some stuff, and in that instant it flashed into my mind that it was Clanton disguised. It seemed to me that I could see the red claw under the paint. The next instant I became certain that it was he from a familiar motion which I knew too well; but before he could draw his weapon I covered him, for the third time in my life. It was that fact that occurred to me, and I said, 'Clanton, the third time! Move and it will be the last. Throw up your hands!'

"I must have spoken with some force. I certainly meant what I said, and doubtless my voice gave that impression. I knew that I was at a disadvantage from the fact that I had spared him that other night, but, on the other hand, he must have been more or less demoralized when he saw that I had pierced his disguise. At any rate, he surrendered at discretion, though he is the quickest and the coolest man with a pistol in the country."

"Except Lloyd Farrington," said I; at which a shadow passed over his face, and the thought

occurred to me that he would rather have been complimented in some other direction.

"By the bye," I asked, "did the boatmen give you any trouble?"

"No," replied Lloyd; "I tried to guard against that. When I saw that Clanton meant mischief, and as I was about to draw, I sprang aside, keeping the two scoundrels well under the cover. They cowed, however, like chicken thieves. It was all over in a moment. The police squad came up, and the three prisoners were speedily handcuffed and taken away.

"I had to give up crossing the bay, but I got the Oakland jail at the sergeant's telephone, explained my mishap to Luke and told him the good news from Melton. Then I walked up to the Occidental and got a little sleep. I went over the bay on the first boat this morning, saw Luke, and told him that I expected to be called away for a few days on important official business, and that I should be busy until luncheon, when I would meet him. I then went off to get my valise and this disguise, and returned to the city in time to arrange with the chief of police to turn Clanton over to the marshal as an escaped prisoner of the United States.

“I did not make myself known in connection with the matter to any one except the chief of police. I don’t care to appear against the boatmen, and they will probably escape with a term for vagrancy.”

“Have you any objection, Lloyd,” I asked, “to my telling Dr. Guthrie of your strange and profoundly interesting mental experience?”

“Certainly not,” he answered, quickly; “on the contrary, I wish you would do so. It will interest him, but it will not surprise him.” He said this in a significant way which I afterwards remembered.

CHAPTER XVI

FARRINGTON'S DIAGNOSIS

I DINED that Monday, according to my appointment, with Guthrie and his wife. They had a charming home on Van Ness Avenue, in which was found every comfort and reasonable luxury. Harvey was quite an art connoisseur and possessed some choice paintings and statuary. I always found the greatest attraction, however, in his library, which contained more rare and interesting books than I had ever seen in a private collection. Marie was a model housewife, and their dinners were perfect.

"Mark," said the doctor, after Marie had said grace and served the soup, "I met a most delightful and delighted company at luncheon, and you were the subject of most of the conversation."

"Ah, indeed!" said I; "it could not have been at the Club, for among the Bohemians I have lately gained a reputation for moroseness."

"No," he replied, "it was at Mrs. Farrington's, in Berkeley."

"Tell us about it, Harvey," said Marie; "I am always interested in those dear people,—interested in their misfortune. Was the young lady, Miss Ruth, there, or did I understand you to say that you saw her off to Melton yesterday?"

"Yes, she is at Melton," said he. Then turning to me, "I received another telegram from Dr. Willis this morning, saying that Mrs. Walton has unexpectedly and strangely rallied, and that he has lost faith in his diagnosis of the case. He wishes me to go up for a consultation after the funeral of Mr. Walton, which will take place to-morrow. I shall go on Wednesday." After a pause he continued, thoughtfully, "I feel very much interested; perhaps she can be saved."

"I sincerely hope that she can be," I assented, earnestly. "These two families, the Farringtons and Wardleighs, so strangely united by love and affection, by sorrow and by separation, have suffered enough."

"Yes, indeed," echoed Mrs. Guthrie. "Surely a merciful Heaven will avert this new agony. Do you think, Harvey," said she, turning to the

doctor, "that the death of Mrs. Walton would endanger Miss Ruth's mind?"

"I hardly know what to think. Of course I hope for the best, but I should be greatly relieved if I could be assured that she would not be subjected to the strain. In the phenomena connected with diseases of the mind, as in the physical world, there is persistence in the line of least resistance. Miss Ruth became a monomaniac from a shock produced by excessive grief; a similar shock may cause dementia. Still, Dr. Willis reports that he has not observed any unfavorable symptoms, and I am greatly encouraged."

"How came you to go over to Mrs. Farrington's to luncheon and your patient away?" inquired Marie.

"I wanted to see Luke Wardleigh," he replied, "to ask him a few questions in regard to the symptoms of his sister, Mrs. Walton. I knew that he was going to Melton this afternoon, and as I desire to study the case before I go to see her on Wednesday, I sought him. I went down to the United States Court building thinking to see him there, but he had gone. So I hurried over to Berkeley. I would have gone

in to see you, Mark, but I did not have the time."

"Who were the pleasant company at Mrs. Farrington's?" asked his wife.

"In a moment," said he. "I want to tell you first of an odd character I met on the boat. I was sitting on the forward deck looking at the gulls dipping and rising as they flew with the steamer, when I was accosted by a queer fellow in green spectacles, who appeared to know me.

"‘I beg your parding, doctor,’ said he, talking through his nose, as we say when a man talks only through his mouth: ‘kin you tell me whether the University over yonder in Berkeley teeches medsin as well as other things?’

"I explained that there was a medical college as a part of the University, but that the lectures are delivered in the city for convenience to the faculty and in order that the students may have access to the hospitals.

"‘En I s’pose, too,’ said he, with a grin, ‘thet it’s conveinter fer gettin’ stiffs.’ Excuse me, Marie."

"Oh, never mind me, Harvey; a doctor's wife must not be too squeamish,—if that is a good word."

"I then asked him," continued Guthrie, "why he inquired about the medical college.

"'Cause I've got a darter as wants to go threw it. She's jest the dogondest brightest gal on the Pacific Slope and a nat'ral doctor. She kin see threw a pusson as good as if they had a candle inside on 'em. She ain't no slouch 'bout medsin already. She's bin nussin' for the doctors for three years,—trained in the nussin'-school. Why, t'other day she went to nuss a woman as they sed had cancer in the stomik. Nothin' of the sort, said my gal, when she seed her. It's only worry and shaygrin, as she up and calls it. An' sure nuff, after a while they finds out it's so.'

"'By the bye,' I said to him, continued Harvey, 'how did you know that I was a doctor?'

"'Oh, I know ye a long time by sight and reputation. I heerd yer testerfy in the Nottingham will case. My, how ye knocked them t'other doctors sky high! They do say, though, 'beout town, that ye did it all fer love of ole Nottingham's purty niece.' I did not know whether to resent his impertinence or not. However, he was so simple and good-natured that I

only laughed. I suppose that he was repeating something he had heard."

"I don't believe it, Harvey!" said Marie, with a laugh. "No one would repeat such a story who was in court; at any rate, if he knew the facts. There I sat, three whole days, while you were on the stand, desperately in love with you and you never even noticed me."

"Well, dearest, I am still young and may hope to be able to make amends by my devotion during the remainder of my life."

"This is delightfully interesting," said I, cynically, "but I would like to hear about the company at lunch."

"Oh, yes, of course," said Guthrie; "I think that I mentioned that the chief subject of conversation at lunch was Mark Grafton, Esq."

I laughed heartily and was able to hide my amusement over Farrington's disguise. At first I thought that I would tell Harvey who his friend was, but then I remembered that both were going to Melton and that Lloyd wished not to be known.

"Now to answer your question," said the doctor. "You wanted to know who were the pleasant company at Mrs. Farrington's. Well,

there was quite a family reunion. When I arrived it was just after noon. Luke had gone to Kenton's office, it seems, and did not get over until the next boat. Lloyd was at his uncle's, and came over soon after I reached there. Mrs. Farrington pressed me to stay to luncheon, and as Luke, whom I wished to see, had not arrived, I consented. She had invited a Rev. Mr. Jordan and his daughter, Miss Edith, who were witnesses, as I understand, against Luke, and whom you mentioned, Mark, last night. With her peach-bloom complexion, bright eyes, lovely face, and vivacious ways she is very pretty."

"I quite agree with you, Harvey," said I, "and I am sure, Marie, that you will agree with both of us when you see her."

The dear little woman laughed at our rhapsody, but said that she was not prepared to dispute it. She promised to go over and see Miss Edith and Mrs. Farrington when Jeanette should return.

"I suppose," said the doctor to me, "that you have told Marie how much interested Miss Jordan was in Luke Wardleigh's acquittal?"

"Yes, but there is a preliminary romance that came out in the trial which I have not told either

of you." I related Miss Edith's testimony and her reference to the runaway team and Luke's courageous rescue.

"Good," said Harvey; "I can now better understand the pretty scene of the drama which I witnessed to-day. It seems that these two young people, who are in love with each other and have been for a week at least, had not been introduced until to-day and had never spoken together. I was talking to her when Luke came in, and you should have seen his face. The meeting was entirely unexpected to him and he looked as if he had just waked up in heaven."

"How did Miss Edith receive him?" asked Marie, with curiosity.

"With a sweet smile and a crimson blush," replied the doctor. "However, though Luke was surprised and delighted at finding her there, he did not forget his dignity or ease of manner for a moment. Bowing to Miss Edith when he was presented by Mrs. Farrington, he said, 'I can never forget, Miss Jordan, your great kindness to me during the terrible days through which I have just passed.'

" 'Mr. Wardleigh,' she replied, 'I only did

what was due to an innocent man wrongly and unjustly accused.'

"After a little while," continued Harvey, "I don't know just how it happened, but those young people were standing alone in the bay-window: I was talking to Mrs. Farrington and Lloyd and Mr. Jordan were discussing some piece of news. They could not have stood there more than two or three minutes until luncheon was announced, but I am quite certain that in that brief time enough was said to enable them to quite understand each other."

"How delightful!" said Marie; "when did you become so observing, Harvey? It is not often that you know what is going on about you." She laughed merrily, which made Adele clap her hands as if she understood it all.

"We had a delightful luncheon," continued the doctor. "I will not repeat what was said; it would make you blush, Mark. When we arose Lloyd excused himself, as he was going off on some official business, and I found the chance to get the information from Luke for which I went over, and then I came away."

In a little while Marie arose, and Harvey and I repaired to the library.

CHAPTER XVII

REUNITED FOR A MOMENT

"RUTH WARDLEIGH'S case is the most remarkable in my experience," said Dr. Guthrie, after we had lighted our cigars. "Not alone within my personal experience, but also within the range of my reading."

"What have been the peculiar characteristics of her insanity?" I inquired.

"I have never considered that she was insane, in the ordinary sense of the word," he replied; "that is to say, there has never been in her mental disorder any approach to mania or dementia. I know that in your profession the notion prevails that a person is insane who is not in every respect sane, and perhaps this opinion is in consonance with a strictly scientific definition. But when we ordinarily speak of a person as being insane we imply a chronic disorder of the brain, inducing chronic disordered mental symptoms. I do not believe that Miss Wardleigh's brain is permanently affected, nor

indeed affected at all as far as the material substance of the organ is concerned."

"Your estimate of her case," I suggested, "is at variance with the idea given me by Lloyd Farrington. I refer to his description of the terrible scene with her after the tragedy which drove her mad. Pardon my expression. I use the word 'mad' because I have no better. Certainly, so far as her relations to Lloyd went, she seems to have been insane."

"I perfectly understand how it must appear so to you," he replied. "I have heard his story, as well as the account by his mother, and I have questioned them with the greatest care. I believe that I am perfectly familiar with all the facts. That Ruth was apparently partially insane—a monomaniac if you choose—cannot be denied; yet after the closest study of the case for five years I am of the opinion that there is now no disease of the brain beyond the temporary obliteration—effacement—of the memory of a particular group of facts, if that can be called a mental disease."

"By the bye," said I, "you speak of being familiar with all of the facts. I am satisfied that I am not. All that I know is that Miss

Ruth seemingly went mad, or partially so, from a shock produced by excessive grief six years ago; that her love for Lloyd Farrington was turned to aversion, and that she believed and declared that he had murdered her parents. In conversation with Mrs. Farrington yesterday she was about to tell me of the change in Ruth's condition, or symptoms, since you became her physician, but just then the young lady entered, the picture of good health, and I lost the rest."

"Then you only know the first phase of the case. Let me tell you, as briefly as I may, my experience in the observation and treatment of the most obscure, and perhaps for that reason the most interesting, instance of mental disorder of which I have had any knowledge.

"It was just a year after the death of her parents, and the first hysterical outbreak, that I was consulted," continued the doctor. "Mrs. Farrington, accompanied by Luke Wardleigh, came to see me. They told me the story with which you are familiar. After the second scene with Lloyd Farrington, they said, she became profoundly melancholy. She manifested, however, the utmost affection for Mrs. Farrington

and for her brother Luke. She never spoke of Lloyd; but whenever anything calculated in any way to remind her of him was said in her presence, she shuddered and exhibited the deepest sympathy for Mrs. Farrington; at least, so they construed her actions. Her general health, they explained, was good, and except for the delusion in regard to Lloyd, she was perfectly rational. Always fond of music, and an exceptionally fine performer, it now became a passion with her, though her selections were always sad. She read a great deal, but seemed to take no interest in current events. I found myself deeply interested from the first, and indicated my willingness to attend her, provided I could have charge of the case. That being conceded, I appointed the following day to see her. My first personal observation and study of her symptoms added very little to my information. I was obliged to proceed slowly and with great caution. She insisted that she was not ill, nor was she, so far as her physical condition was concerned. I feared to approach the subject of her delusion lest I might precipitate an hysterical paroxysm. It was several weeks before I made the first experiment. I then directed Mrs. Farrington to

place in the room a photograph of her son, which I could pick up casually. I called and found Miss Wardleigh alone. She was in unusually good spirits. I asked her to play Schumann's 'Traumerei,' which she did with exquisite touch and feeling. I then began to speak of Mrs. Farrington and, taking up Lloyd's photograph, asked if she knew her son. The effect was instantaneous and painful in the extreme. She burst into tears and begged me never to mention his name again in her hearing. 'I knew him,' she exclaimed, 'before he committed the terrible deed which darkens my life; and I rested under the delusion that I loved him. My eyes were opened to his true character only when it was too late, too late. For God's sake, do not speak of him in the presence of his mother.'

"After a study of the case for three months," continued Guthrie, "during which period I saw her perhaps a dozen times, I concluded positively that her brain, as a physical organ, was unimpaired. I became equally certain that the delusion with which she was afflicted was the result of a profound and startling mental impression caused by a terrific mental shock. This

impression must have been received, I concluded, while she had hysteria, that mysterious disorder of the nervous system whose anatomical seat is still unknown to medical science. She had no present symptoms of hysteria, but there are well-authenticated instances of lasting impressions first obtained during a paroxysm of this nervous disease. The danger in such cases is that the impression may leave a permanent trace, impairing the brain and causing mania. The problem with me, therefore, was to remove the delusional impression."

"I presume," said I, "that you found little assistance from drugs."

"None at all," he replied; "of course if I had had a shattered or enfeebled constitution to deal with, or any present physical disorder, I should have treated her accordingly; but here was a young woman in perfect health of body and mind, except the delusion, which appeared to be, as I say, simply the memory of a false impression received while in an hysterical paroxysm."

"I concluded to try an experiment at which I doubt not most of my professional brethren would scoff, and which I myself would not

recommend to others. I had given much study to the strange phenomena of hypnotism. I had personally observed several instances where impressions had been produced upon the minds of persons while in the hypnotic state which had continued after the subject had been brought into the normal condition.

"She had now been under my care for six months. At that time Lloyd Farrington returned from Nevada and I met him for the first time. He came to me with young Wardleigh, who had just graduated from the University. I received a most favorable impression of Farrington, and from that time to this he has grown upon me. He has a fine character."

"I quite agree with you, Harvey," said I. "I esteem Lloyd Farrington as one of the noblest young men I have ever known."

"Well," continued Guthrie, "I submitted my plans to him and to Luke, and they were kind enough to express entire confidence in my judgment."

"I prepared Miss Wardleigh," he proceeded, "by interesting her in the phenomena of hypnotism and by giving her some of the latest discussions of the subject to read. When I sug-

gested it she was perfectly willing to submit to the experiment upon herself. Of course she had not the remotest idea of my purpose, but looked upon it simply as a fad. When I was ready, on Sunday, a few days after my first interview with Farrington, I directed him to come to his mother's house at two o'clock. He was troubled at the idea of meeting her, but I assured him that there would be no repetition of the scene which had occurred at his last interview with her, which he had described to me, though I had first had it from his mother.

"The usual method of producing the hypnotic state, as you know, is to direct the keen attention of the subject to some object, usually a bright spot, and then to make certain passes over the face and to gently press the eyes as they incline to close. But I have discovered a drug which by its action upon the sensorium inhibits muscular volition and voluntary ideation, producing the same phenomena as by the ordinary method. I have never given this discovery to the public, nor shall I. It would be liable to abuse. The action of the drug is not perceptible for about two hours after it is administered. On the day preceding the experiment I gave a powder to

Luke and directed him to give it to her at twelve o'clock, telling him that I would be over at half-past one. When I arrived I found Luke and the others quite anxious, but I reassured them.

"As the hour of two o'clock approached I hastened the action of the drug by causing Ruth to fix her attention on a small Japanese crystal and by making a few passes. Almost immediately she was completely hypnotized, the power of voluntary ideation and muscular action being entirely suspended. I then brought her under the influence of my will. 'Miss Ruth,' said I, 'will you please play for me the first movement of the "Moonlight Sonata"?'"

" 'With pleasure,' she replied with alacrity, rising from the ottoman on which she was partially reclining and walking straight to the piano, though her eyes were closed. She rendered the piece with masterly skill and indescribable tenderness. At a signal from me Lloyd entered as she began to play and stood near the door expectantly. When she had finished the Sonata she sat facing the piano with her hands still upon the key-board and her eyes closed. I stood at the end of the piano.

“ ‘Miss Ruth,’ I said, with commanding firmness, ‘please look at me.’ She did so, opening her eyes as if she were waking, or rather coming out of the hypnotic state; but I knew from the rigidity of her body that she was still fully under the influence.

“ ‘Do you know,’ I exclaimed, ‘that you are under a strange and painful delusion?’

“ ‘Why, what is that, doctor?’ she replied in a tone of startled anxiety.

“ ‘In regard to Lloyd Farrington,’ said I. When I uttered his name she shuddered slightly, looked up appealingly, and was about to say something, when I checked her. ‘It is all a delusion caused by hysteria,’ I exclaimed, almost sharply. ‘You must forget it. Your father and mother were drowned in a terrible accident and Lloyd was in nowise to blame. He is noble and true. He loved you then and still loves you and you love him.’ As I spoke, the expression of her face changed with the ideas which my words conveyed. Tears flowed from her eyes as I recalled the death of her parents; tenderness beamed from her whole countenance when I told her that Lloyd still loved her.

“ ‘Why, of course, now that you tell me,’ she

said in a low, far-away voice, 'I see that it was all a mad delusion. Merciful God! how he must have suffered! Truly, truly, as you say, I still love him with my whole heart.'

"With a look I directed Lloyd to come forward.

" 'Miss Ruth,' said I, 'Mr. Farrington is here; speak to him.'

" 'Yes, I know,' she said, with quick apprehension, 'I must speak to him.' She then turned, rose, walked up to him and placed her hands in his. 'Dear Lloyd,' she exclaimed with infinite tenderness, 'can you forgive me for all the anguish I have caused you?' He did not trust himself to speak, but lifted and pressed her hands to his lips.

"The scene was painful. Poor Lloyd was deeply affected. Mrs. Farrington was weeping, and Luke sat with clasped hands and an anxious look on his face. My own nerves were strung to a fearful tension,—I determined to end the scene.

" 'Miss Wardleigh,' I said, arresting her attention immediately, 'did you notice how hard it is raining?' - She dropped Lloyd's hands, walked to the window and looked out. The sun

was shining brightly but she seemed to see the rain. 'How it pours!' she exclaimed. I motioned Farrington to be seated and called her back.

" 'Miss Ruth,' said I, 'I suppose that you know Mr. Farrington has gone?'

" 'Gone?' she replied, inquiringly and rather vacantly, not seeming to return to the emotions and thoughts of a moment before.

" 'In regard to that delusion which has possessed you concerning Lloyd Farrington, I require of you that you absolutely forget it and all of the circumstances and facts connected with it and the events which caused it. Do you promise this?'

" 'Yes, if you wish it,' she said, simply and without any emotion.

" 'I not only wish it, I insist upon it,' said I, forcibly.

" 'Very well,' she replied.

" I then directed her to return to the ottoman on which she was seated when she passed into the hypnotic state. She did so. I made a few sharp passes over her face and commanded her to awake. With a deep-drawn sigh she returned to consciousness.

“Now was the crucial moment. Farrington was still in the room. Would she repulse him with horror. I trembled with anxiety. I waited; she rubbed her eyes and yawned. ‘Surely,’ said she, ‘I must have been asleep. How stupid in me!’ Her eyes fell on Lloyd, and her face showed simply a slight astonishment as if at seeing a stranger in the room. I determined to test the matter at once.

“‘Yes,’ said I, ‘you were asleep and talking in your sleep.’

“‘Really, do you mean it?’ she inquired, half anxiously and half amused; ‘what did I say?’

“‘You seemed to be talking to Lloyd,’ I replied, and awaited the effect.

“‘Lloyd?’ she said, inquiringly; ‘what a pretty name! but I never knew any one who bore it. I must have been talking to one of my dreamland acquaintances. I have a number, but I never caught their names.’

“‘Mrs. Farrington,’ said I, turning to her, ‘I think that you had better take Miss Wardleigh to her room. She seems very fatigued.’ Ruth she bowed slightly, as if to a stranger to whom arose listlessly and walked slowly out of the room with her friend. As she passed Lloyd

she had not been introduced. There was no sign of recognition. He had the presence of mind to remain perfectly passive, simply returning her bow. But as soon as she was gone a look of anguish swept over his expressive and handsome features. I called Mrs. Farrington back and told her that if Ruth should ask who Lloyd was, to say that he was a friend of mine who had come to find me there."

"Did you consider your experiment a failure?" I inquired of the doctor.

"Not by any means, as you will see," he replied.

"As I was saying," he continued, "Lloyd seemed greatly distressed,—looked the picture of helpless despair as Ruth passed without recognizing him.

"‘My dear Farrington,’ I said, ‘though we have apparently not succeeded in restoring Miss Wardleigh to her normal mental condition, I feel greatly encouraged by what we have just seen. If we have at least removed—effaced the trace of the delusional impression regarding yourself received by her while in the hysterical paroxysm caused by the tragic death of her parents, we have done much. There was always

danger that mania or dementia might follow should she be afflicted by hysteria again while the delusion was present. If I have removed that delusion, as I hope and believe I have, I have at least greatly lessened the danger of insanity.'

"Farrington was much relieved, and although he was heart-broken at having lost her again just as he thought that he had regained her, still, he was grateful beyond expression when I made these explanations to him. I now told him and Luke that I thought it best that he should not see her again for a considerable time, and I directed Luke to impress upon Mrs. Farrington the necessity of continuing the same silence in regard to Lloyd as in the past. I then came away with Farrington, and a few days later he left the city."

CHAPTER XVIII

DAWN

THE doctor paused for a moment to offer me a fresh cigar.

I confess that I was much affected by the narrative. The change in the mental condition of Ruth Wardleigh was to me inexplicable. The account of the meeting between her and Lloyd was deeply interesting. I remembered a vague reference to the incident by Farrington when he told me his story in Arizona, but I had no intimation of the sad character and painful circumstances of the episode.

"Harvey," said I, "while I think of it, let me tell you of two strange and interesting incidents, seemingly connecting these two lovers, for so I think of them notwithstanding their tragic separation." I then described the affair at the ferry Friday night, and related Lloyd's adventure of the night before as he had told it to me that morning. When I concluded by quoting a remark that Farrington had made, to

the effect that the doctor would be interested, but not surprised, Harvey said,—

“Farrington is only partly right. In view of what Ruth has often told me of her strange dreams, this particular incident does not surprise me; but the possibility of such alleged occult experiences being true is a matter of wonderment. You will better understand what I mean when I have told you the remainder of Miss Wardleigh’s story.”

“Pardon me for interrupting you,” I interposed; “I promise not to do it again. Please proceed.”

He continued, “After my hypnotic experiment I waited several weeks before attempting to discover whether there was any trace of the delusional impression on her mind. I then tested her by talking with Luke, in her presence, of Lloyd, and in such a manner that had she remembered him she could not have failed to show it. There was no sign to indicate that she ever knew or had heard of him. Then after a time I caused Mrs. Farrington to question her in my presence, gently and carefully, in regard to the tragic death of her father and mother. To our surprise we discovered that all memory

of the terrible affair had been effaced. She remembered her parents perfectly, but only down to a period just preceding her meeting Lloyd. Strange to say, she had a clear recollection of other events during that time; there was simply an entire effacement of the memory of the group of facts connected with Lloyd Farrington and the death of her father and mother. After a while she began to ask questions regarding their death, and Mrs. Farrington, under my advice, told her, with care and without mentioning the particular circumstances, that they had been drowned and that she had been very ill after the event. So she came to recognize the fact that she had forgotten something in the delirium of a severe illness caused by the fearful accident which had made her an orphan.

“Matters ran on thus for months,—months running into years. From time to time Lloyd came to the city and we discussed her condition. One day he said to me,—

“ ‘Why may I not make Ruth’s acquaintance anew? Perhaps she may learn to love me; and as I have always loved her during these dreary years of separation, we may be happily reunited.’

"I was startled. I had often thought of it. But in my own mind I was convinced that it would be a most dangerous experiment. Yet how was I to refuse the request which was implied in the suggestion? I thought of his heroic self-sacrifice, of the depth and constancy of his love, of the yearning of his young heart. He saw the distress on my face, and said, in that sad tone with which you are familiar,—

"‘I see that it will not do, but tell me why. Do not withhold anything because you may fear the effect upon me. I am strong and I have steeled myself against the worst.’

"‘Then I frankly confess, Lloyd,’ said I, ‘that it would be extremely dangerous. A new acquaintance with you would probably revive the delusion, and would in all likelihood result most disastrously.’

"‘I feared as much,’ he said, ‘and it is therefore better, better for her sake and for mine, that matters should remain as they are.’ His words were so despairingly sad that they pierced me to the heart. I did not try to encourage him, for I had no encouragement to offer.

"Three years went by. Lloyd was away most of the time, and only came up now and then for

a day or so. Luke was away with him. I think that he went along hoping to make life less desolate for his friend. They were devoted to each other.

"I did not see Ruth very often. I had no hope of benefiting her, but I visited her enough to observe the growth and development of her intellect and character. Aside from her inability to recall certain particular facts, her mind was perfectly healthy. She was still passionately fond of music. She read constantly and seemed to live a peaceful, happy life. She was a gentle and loving companion for Mrs. Farrington, of whose devotion to her you are aware.

"Speaking of Mrs. Farrington, let me say," continued Harvey, "that she is certainly one of the most beautiful characters I have ever known. What I have said of her and what you have heard from others, probably, present her only in relation to her devotion to Ruth Wardleigh and Lloyd. But I have learned to know her in other respects. She is a most highly cultivated woman, and her sympathy and charity are boundless. Her means are limited,—indeed, she now depends upon Lloyd for everything, except that Miss Ruth has a small income which goes

towards the expenses of the household. But Judge Tremwick, who is well to do and very charitable, and whose wife is an invalid, has made his sister, Mrs. Farrington, his almoner. It is to my own knowledge that there are quite a number of young men and young women who are being assisted by her in their course through the University, and I know, too, that many a poor widow has had Mrs. Farrington's helping hand and tender care. In all her work she has had the active advice, sympathy, and assistance of Miss Wardleigh. I have always encouraged Ruth to go out on such missions, for professional reasons which will be obvious to you now that you know her story. So it is that while her life has been comparatively quiet, it has not been dull or uninteresting. But to return to my professional story—I might say romance.

“It is now just a year since I began to notice a change in my patient. She became very nervous and had a troubled, anxious look in her eyes. I was greatly worried from the moment that I observed the change. I questioned Mrs. Farrington closely. She said that Ruth's general health appeared to be as good as usual; that she did not complain of any pain, but that her

sleep was not restful. She frequently talked in her slumbers, though her dreams, if dreams they were, seemed pleasant, even joyful. Mrs. Farrington said that she often went into Ruth's room and watched her as she lay asleep, and was struck by the expression of contentment and happiness which had taken the place of the deep shadow of sadness that had so constantly rested there since the tragedy.

"I examined Ruth closely. There was no trace of any organic trouble. I questioned her, and she insisted that she was perfectly well. Yet, as the weeks passed (I was in the habit of visiting them on Sunday) I felt that she was fading,—becoming, if I may use the expression, more ethereal. I could see no symptoms of mental disorder, yet I feared that there was some impending brain-trouble. I increased my efforts to induce her to take an active interest—to actively participate in the charitable work of Mrs. Farrington. I was not successful. She became listless and even indifferent, though she sought by every means in her power to show that her love for Mrs. Farrington had not abated in the least.

"She became unusually reticent, timid, and

as we would say of a child, bashful. Once or twice while I was talking to her, or rather when she was answering my questions, she blushed, not at anything I suggested or that she had said, but apparently at her own thoughts.

“What could I think, say, or do? The case was deeper than my science. I gave her some simple drugs for nervousness, not expecting to do more than to prevent secondary trouble. The change that had come over Ruth was utterly inexplicable to me. I was in great fear that it portended some brain-trouble. My science, my experience, and my judgment were at fault. At length I became satisfied that she was withholding something from me. How could I form a safe conclusion unless I could know all of the facts? I talked it over with Mrs. Farrington. She agreed with me. ‘Do you know, doctor,’ said she, ‘that Ruth acts precisely as if she were in love.’

“‘Perhaps she is,’ I replied, laughingly.

“‘Then it must be with some one in her dreams,’ said she, seriously, and with a significance that startled me. ‘I say this because for some months she has been my constant companion. Not that I have attempted any sur-

veillance, but she has not cared to go out without me, nor with me when there has been a likelihood that we would meet people. She has had no company.'

" 'Is she acquainted with any one in whom she would be likely to be interested?' I inquired. 'I ask this,' I added, 'because I frankly confess that your suggestion impresses me very strongly.'

" 'No, no,' replied Lloyd's mother, with a depth of tenderness in her voice and a far-away look in her eyes; 'no, no, I am absolutely certain that there is no one in the wide world except my son who is anything to her in that way, and him she has forgotten, at least in her waking and conscious life.'

"The concluding remark of Mrs. Farrington suggested to my mind the possibility of a mental or spiritual experience on the part of my patient which I determined to investigate, however improbable it might seem.

"To this end I quickly determined to be entirely frank with Ruth in the hope of inducing her to be equally frank with me. I said as much to Mrs. Farrington, and she agreed that it would be best for me to talk with her earnestly and seriously. She sent Ruth to me.

“ ‘Miss Ruth,’ said I, ‘please pardon what may seem to be mere curiosity—perhaps impertinent curiosity—on my part. But I really wish you to tell me what it is that has been troubling your mind for some time. You know that for more than four years, at the earnest desire of your brother, I have been attending you. I know that you have always insisted that you were not ill, and I have always encouraged you in that belief. Yet, during all this time I have known that you were in imminent danger of serious mental disorder—disease.’ As I said this she sat with lips apart, with a look of deep distress in her dark eyes. She was not, however, offended. I determined to cut deeply; to be cruel with the hope of arousing her to the necessity of opening her mind to me.

“ ‘Although you do not remember,’ I continued, ‘it is nevertheless quite true that something over five years ago, at the time of the terrible accident which caused the death of your parents, of which you have been told, you were very ill and threatened with permanent brain-disease. This danger has not yet passed, though I believe that it can and will be averted. Recently I have noticed a change in you which

greatly distresses me and I insist that you keep nothing from me.'

" 'What is it that you observe about me, doctor?' she inquired, gently and hesitatingly.

" I told her all that I had noticed, and I then quoted what Mrs. Farrington had said in regard to her acting as if she were in love with some one. I did not, of course, add what Mrs. Farrington had said in regard to her implicit belief that Ruth had never loved any one but Lloyd. I therefore felt half ashamed of myself for having practically misquoted Mrs. Farrington. I started to say that of course Mrs. Farrington was only joking, but I did not proceed. It was so necessary to arouse her in some way that I let the matter stand at that.

" She had bowed her head in her hands as she sat half reclining on an ottoman. Suddenly she looked up with tears in her beautiful eyes and said,—

" 'Dr. Guthrie, though you and my dearest friend, Mrs. Farrington, are seemingly unkind, yet I know that both of you mean it for my good.'

" Her words cut me to the quick. 'Yes,' said

I, 'believe me, Miss Ruth, our only desire is for your welfare.'

" 'Listen, then,' said she, 'and I will tell you all: For some time now I have had, at frequent intervals, the most realistic and vivid dreams, if dreams they can be called. It seems to me that my soul leaves my body and that I travel far away to an arid and treeless land, which appears to me like descriptions I have read of Mexico. Yet the people that I see there are our own people. I am drawn particularly to one for whose companionship my soul yearns. I am not ashamed to confess that I am in love,—in love with this man of my dreams, since I never loved any one else. Ah, doctor,' she exclaimed, with the utmost simplicity, 'he is so handsome, and though he does not know me and I have never heard him speak, I am sure that he is as true and as good as he is handsome, manly, and dignified. The strangest thing about it all is that I seem to have known him before, and when I have these visions I find myself trying to recall something that I have forgotten about him.'

"Judge of my astonishment, Mark," continued Dr. Guthrie, after a short pause, "when I heard this strange story. It seemed utterly in-

credible, and yet it appeared so real. When I came to reflect about it afterwards it did not seem altogether improbable. She had known and loved Lloyd, and the impressions of that experience, of those emotions, were no doubt impressed upon her mind and spiritual consciousness, if you please, though now obscured by the delusion to which she had been subjected. Why should she not be able unwittingly to return to those impressions while in the state of unconsciousness? True, she spoke of a strange land, describing the scenery of Arizona, where Lloyd was sojourning. But she must have heard Luke's descriptions, which would account for that. At any rate, that is the way I reasoned about the matter at the time, though more recent events and occurrences in this remarkable case have led me to doubt my own physiological and psychological explanations.

"However, at the very time of my conversation I became well satisfied that her experience was not at an end. I deemed it prudent therefore to remove any anxiety or apprehension that my inquiries might have caused. I said that vivid dreams were not unusual, and that I could see no evil that could come from them. Before

leaving I found an opportunity of speaking to Mrs. Farrington. 'She sees Lloyd in her dreams,' said I, 'and the recollection of her early love is struggling to return.' I then related what Ruth had told me, and cautioned Mrs. Farrington not to say anything to her of the past.

"The next day I sent over a drug which caused her to sleep very soundly, and which removed the extreme nervousness which she had shown for some time. I kept up this treatment for several weeks.

"About that time Lloyd Farrington came up. I told him of this new phase. He was deeply affected, and particularly when I ventured to say that it might result in her being restored to her full faculties and to him.

"The day after Lloyd's arrival I visited Berkeley, and Ruth told me of a recurrence of her dream, but that this time she had met her 'hero,' as she called him, nearer home.

"And now, Mark," concluded the doctor, "my story is finished. A year has passed without any change. From time to time Miss Wardleigh has told me of the strange double existence which she claims she is living. That she fre-

quently has visions of Lloyd Farrington while asleep seems certain. The problem with me is to know what would be the result if she should actually meet him while awake."

"Certainly, Harvey," said I, after considering for a time his final words, "this is the most remarkable case of mental disease of which I have ever heard. Of course it is the more interesting because relating to these people whom we know, and in the web of whose lives we have both become curiously entangled. But what, then, is your plan? You said last night that you thought you saw a solution of the problem,—that you believed you could cure Ruth Wardleigh and restore her to Lloyd Farrington. How do you propose to do it?"

"The shock of excessive and violent grief," he replied, "six years ago produced in her hysteria, during which a delusion,—a mad delusion, if you will—took possession of her mind and left an impression which I was able to remove only at the expense of a partial effacement of her memory. I now believe that if I can produce intense mental excitement through the opposite emotion of excessive joy, and while she is in that state if I can suddenly revive the recol-

lection of what she has apparently forgotten, there will occur an immediate transfer to the normal mental state. This I propose to do during the second trial of Luke Wardleigh, if you will permit and assist me."

I said that I would, and we then discussed the details of the plan at some length.

It was now late and I was about to go home, when the door-bell rang and a telegram was handed to the doctor. He read it and became quite excited. It was from Dr. Willis, at Melton, and read,—

"If possible come up to-morrow morning. Miss W. prostrated by strange excitement. Very hysterical. Appears to have been caused by something she was reading in *Morning Herald*."

The doctor thought for a moment, and then asked me if I could get a telegram rushed through and delivered to Willis. I said that I could, and that if he would write it I would take it down at once. He wrote a message saying that he wished Willis to give Miss Ruth a particular drug that night, and promising to go up

in the morning. He also advised that she should not attend the funeral of Mr. Walton.

As I arose to go Harvey picked up the *Herald*, which lay upon the table, saying, "Wait a moment; let us see if we can discover anything that would have startled her. I saw nothing about her brother in the paper."

I looked over his shoulder, and in a moment caught sight of a local item to which I called his attention. He read as follows:

"Sergeant Squires, of the harbor patrol, between one and two o'clock this morning, arrested three men at the Clay Street wharf. Two of them, John Dickey and Hiram Jones, are well known to the police. The third man is thought to be an escaped convict. They were caught in the act of trying to rob and murder a young man who had employed two of them to meet him at the wharf and row him over to Oakland after the last ferry. The two pretended boatmen picked up the third man, and when the young gentleman came they assaulted him. For some unexplained reason he suspected treachery and notified Sergeant Squires. When the desperadoes made the attack they were met by a

flashing pistol in the hands of their intended victim, who exhibited so much coolness and celerity in handling his weapon that the officers were ardent in their praise. The officers who were hiding sprang forward and handcuffed the three robbers. The name of the young man was not learned.'

"I think that I understand it," said the doctor, when he had finished reading. "Ruth has read this account and has learned that the man whom she has seen in her dreams is a real being. I am not surprised that she should be excited. It was fortunate that Lloyd's name was not used. I shall go to Melton by the first train in the morning."

I wished him a safe journey, and he bade me good-night.

CHAPTER XIX

GUTHRIE RETURNS FROM MELTON

I DID not see any of the characters of this strange drama again for three days; not until Thursday.

In the mean time my wife returned from Santa Barbara, and on Wednesday she and Marie drove over to Berkeley to call on Mrs. Farrington. Jeanette was perfectly delighted with the old lady; she talked of her incessantly when she came home, and of Miss Edith Jordan, whom they also met at Mrs. Farrington's. Marie dined with us at the hotel, as the doctor was away, and I heard them planning to have that young person over to meet some of their gentlemen friends. I said nothing, and laughed to myself. If they only knew how little she cared for anybody just now, save the one whom she had got into trouble, as she imagined.

Thursday morning I received a telegram from Farrington saying that he would be at home that day and would meet me the next afternoon

at my office. Guthrie reached home Wednesday night, but had to see his patients, and so telephoned to ask Jeanette and me to spend Thursday evening with them. He wanted to report to me, he said. After dinner Jeanette and I went up to see them.

In his study, alone and undisturbed, we lighted our inevitable cigars, and I asked the doctor to give me an account of his trip to Melton.

"You will remember," said he, "that I had a double object in going up,—two patients to see. My first purpose was to meet Dr. Willis in consultation over the case of Mrs. Walton; but when he wired me about Ruth Wardleigh my interest and anxiety centred in her.

"I arrived at Melton in the afternoon, and found a messenger awaiting me at the depot with a note from Willis asking me to meet him at the Walton residence at five o'clock. I walked to the house, which proved to be a small, pleasant home. It was, however, desolate that day. The funeral was over, but several friends of Mrs. Walton were still there to render any service needed. Willis met me at the door and asked me to step up to Miss Ruth's room. As she was

my patient, he saw the propriety of allowing me to see her alone; so he said that he desired to see Mrs. Walton, and would join me later.

“ I found Ruth sitting by a window overlooking a pretty flower-garden. She had not put on mourning, but wore a dark gown. Though sad, she did not seem very nervous; probably the medicine I had prescribed by telegraph the night before had proven an effective sedative.

“ ‘ Doctor,’ she exclaimed, rising and coming forward, ‘ I am ever so glad to see you. I feel oppressed with the gloom which surrounds this sad home. My poor sister is very ill, and I have had a shock that has quite unnerved me. Last night I was all but distracted. I felt that I must scream, or laugh, or die. Just think of it! with my sister’s dead husband lying below! Dr. Willis has been very kind; when I seemed to be getting beyond control of myself he came with the blessed medicine which you telegraphed him to give me. How thoughtful of you! I can never live long enough to thank you for your attention and kindness.’

· “ ‘ Yet,’ said I, ‘ you seem to be quite well to-day considering your unhappy surroundings.’

“ ‘Yes,’ she replied, ‘I am certainly very much better this afternoon. I slept soundly towards morning and long into the forenoon. I have just come from my sister, with whom I stayed during the funeral services.’

“ ‘Were you aware of the telegram which Dr. Willis sent to me concerning you?’ I inquired.

“ ‘No,’ she answered; ‘though of course I knew he must have communicated with you. What did he say?’

“ ‘He telegraphed me,’ I replied, ‘that you were thrown into a violent nervous excitement by reading something in one of yesterday morning’s papers.’ I said this pointedly in order to take her by surprise and force her confidence. She was still disposed to be reticent and secretive notwithstanding the cordial and frank relations I had succeeded in establishing between us regarding the mental aberration I was studying.

“ ‘How strange,’ she exclaimed, ‘that Dr. Willis or any one should have discovered it! Yet it was so.’ She paused a little, and then said, ‘On Sunday night I arrived about ten o’clock and was met at the depot by Dr. Willis

and his wife, who was a schoolmate of mine when I was a child in this town. The doctor told me, as gently as possible, of the death of Robert three hours earlier. I was greatly shocked and distressed, of course, and deeply anxious concerning Grace. Mrs. Willis wanted me to go to their house, but I felt that my duty called me to the bedside of my sister, so they drove here at once. Poor Grace! I remained by her until she had fallen into a quiet sleep, and then came to my room to get some rest, leaving word with the nurse to call me if there should be any change in my sister. I went to bed and to sleep at once. It must have been about one o'clock——' she stopped, and seemed to be thinking of something and to be forgetful that I was present. Finally I said,—

“ ‘ Well?’

“ ‘ Oh, pardon me, doctor!’ she exclaimed. ‘ I am losing my mind; where was I? Yes, I remember; I must have gone to San Francisco at once,—as soon as my body was asleep. I saw him near the water. He was about to take a boat. I heard the men talk. They were going to murder him. I told him of the danger. He listened, though he did not know who it was

that warned him. I saw him go to the police station, and then I lost consciousness and must have returned to my sleep.'

" 'Well,' said I, as she ceased, 'it is only another one of your strange dreams.'

" 'True,' she responded, 'only another dream. But now please read that.' She handed me a copy of the paper containing the local item which you and I read. 'I tell you, Dr. Guthrie,' she exclaimed, 'the strange dreams, as you call them, are phases of my actual life. This is the dream; that is the reality. Oh, when will I awake! When will I awake!' She was much excited and I was greatly worried.

" 'Miss Ruth,' said I, 'let me beg of you to be calm and to think no more of this matter for a few days. You know how anxious I am for your physical and mental health. These sad surroundings have unnerved you and——'

" 'Please, doctor,' she interrupted, with some petulancy, 'don't treat me like a child. I will obey you as far as I can, but be candid, please, and deal with me as a rational being.'

" 'I thank you for the reproof,' I replied; 'you are right. It is my duty to be as frank and candid with you as I ask you to be with me.

Listen, then: you believe now that the man whom you have seen in these visions and towards whom you feel yourself so strangely drawn actually lives?"

"‘I do,’ she answered, with flushed cheeks and moistened eyes.

"‘Very well; it is a mystery. I have no explanations; I dispute nothing. I offer to help you to solve the mystery. Are you willing that I should try?"

"‘By all means, doctor, by all means!’ she exclaimed, confidence and gratitude beaming in her face.

"‘I will do it,’ said I, assuming an air of confidence I did not feel. I fully appreciated the fact that I had entered an unknown field of inquiry and that I was about to undertake a dangerous experiment. ‘I will do it,’ I repeated, ‘upon condition that you dismiss the subject from your mind for a few days, and until you return to the city.’

"‘Ah, Dr. Guthrie,’ she answered, ‘you are requiring too much of me. You ask me to forget,—to dismiss from my mind the one subject, if you so call my visions, that fills my thoughts and my heart.’ As she said this her face was

suffused with a delicate blush and her eyes filled with tears. 'No, no, Dr. Guthrie,' she exclaimed again, 'I cannot forget him! I cannot forget him!' and she covered her face and wept softly.

"I was much worried," continued Harvey, "and began to fear hysteria. I saw that I must change my plan. Instead of attempting to divert her attention from the absorbing and overwhelming passion that had now taken possession of her mind and heart, I concluded that it would be best to talk with her freely and to lead her mind gradually to the climax which we have in contemplation."

"But, Harvey," said I, interrupting his strange narrative, "are you not afraid that the strain will be too great and that the shock may——"

"For God's sake, Mark," he exclaimed, "do not speak of it! I am all but crazed myself by anxiety. But according to my best professional judgment the chances are more than favorable. She is remarkably strong physically, and, though it may sound strange, she is intellectually strong and well balanced. What we are going to do in effect is to perform an operation on her brain. I

am acting, as I say, according to my best professional judgment; and all that I can do beyond that is to hope and pray"—he spoke reverently—"for a successful result."

I was deeply touched by his words, and I hastened to assure him of my utmost confidence in him and of my belief that Mrs. Farrington, Lloyd, and Luke Wardleigh would in any event hold him blameless. I then begged him to proceed with the account of his interview with Miss Wardleigh.

"Having seen the necessity of changing my plan," said he, "I determined to direct her attention to the possibility that she was only dreaming of some one that she really knew. After all, that was the simple fact. To use a paradox, she did know Lloyd Farrington, though she did not know that she did. It is true that her strange clairvoyant experience, and that of Lloyd Farrington, which was still stranger, were almost beyond rational belief. Yet who that has studied the mysteries of life will presume to measure or limit the powers of the astral body?"

"I do not pretend to understand your ideas, Harvey," said I, "but I will not question your

conclusions. Did you go into the matter in your further conversation with Miss Wardleigh?" I asked the question because I saw that he was disposed to philosophize and soliloquize, while I was curious and anxious to hear more of the actual experience of his patient.

"No," he replied, "I cannot say that I did discuss the matter with her in the deeper sense in which it presents itself to me now. I merely asked her to relate again all of the particulars of her visions. She did so, but there was nothing beyond what she had told me before, as I have heretofore related it to you,—that is to say, except some interesting and touching details. She dwelt, for instance, with more particularity upon the vague and flitting impression that the hero of her dreams was some one whom she had once known.

"‘It may be so,’ I suggested to her tentatively.

"‘How can it be?’ she asked, with a puzzled and anxious look in her eyes. I was afraid to pursue the subject.

"‘At any rate,’ said I, pointedly, ‘it would seem from this last experience that the man who has won your heart in your dreams is an actual

person. It is a mystery which must be solved for the happiness of your life, and perhaps for the safety of your mind. I have given you my pledge to solve the mystery, and I will do it before many days have passed.'

" 'Ah, Dr. Guthrie,' said she, 'you are the dearest and noblest man I have ever known, outside of my dreams,—at least I think so.' She said this in a confused way, with a gentle smile and a far-away look in her eyes.

" 'Now,' said I, 'we must lay our plans. In the first place, I am to have your absolute confidence and implicit obedience——'

" 'That is to say,' she exclaimed, 'provided you do not require impossibilities of me.'

" 'I understand,' said I. 'You will not engage to dismiss the subject of your dreams from your mind.'

" 'I simply cannot,' she assured me, with some emphasis.

" 'You must, however, have no more visions. I will leave you medicine that will prevent it.' As I said this a look of sad disappointment swept for a moment over her face, but she immediately looked at me with confidence and said that I knew best.

“ ‘ When will you return to the city?’ she inquired.

“ ‘ To-morrow,’ I answered; ‘ and you?’

“ ‘ Oh, that will depend upon the condition of Grace.’

“ ‘ From something I have heard, I think that you should be in the city on Monday,’ I said.

“ ‘ Why, what will occur on Monday?’

“ ‘ Luke’s second trial,’ I replied. My object was to create a degree of anxiety in her mind concerning her brother, so as to concentrate her attention upon that matter as well as upon the subject we had been discussing. ‘ For his sake,’ I continued, ‘ and in order to express your confidence in him, you should attend the court.’ I had another object also. I intended to stimulate such anxiety in order that a revulsion of feeling might occur. It was, as you know, a part of my plan.

“ ‘ If you think so, I will certainly go,’ she said, with interest and enthusiasm. Just then Dr. Willis came to the door; she bade him enter, and added, ‘ That is, if I can leave Grace. How is she, Dr. Willis? Can I go to the city on Sunday?’

“ ‘ She is much better,’ he replied, ‘ and if she

continues to improve, as I think she will, you can safely go by that time.'

"As I expected to return by the early morning train, I promised to call again that evening, and at Dr. Willis's suggestion we went down to see Mrs. Walton.

"I found Mrs. Walton," he continued, "very weak and emaciated. She had been ill for several months and had suffered greatly. For many weeks she had been unable to retain any food in her stomach. After a careful examination Willis and I withdrew for our consultation.

"I learned from him the full particulars of her ailment. At first, as he told me, he could form no conclusion as to the disease. Then he determined that she had a cancer of the stomach. She had certainly shown many symptoms to justify this conclusion, but there were some things that led him to doubt this diagnosis: more especially of recent days. Instead of growing worse, as he expected, she was getting better, and she suffered less.

"I will not weary you, Mark," continued Harvey, "with the details of our discussion. Suffice that we came to the deliberate conclusion that Mrs. Walton was not afflicted with the mortal

complaint which Willis had supposed, and that she could and most probably would be cured. Do you know, Mark," he exclaimed, "that I could not get out of my mind during this discussion that queer fellow on the Oakland boat. He told me about his 'gal,' as he called her, and how she declared a supposed case of cancer, of which she knew, to be nothing but worry and 'shaygrin.'"

"I remember. You gave me an account of the conversation," said I. "By the bye, did you happen to meet your acquaintance at Melton?"

"Why, yes, I did; I saw him twice on the street. What in the world led you to ask the question? I have said nothing about his being or belonging there."

I commenced to laugh, but Harvey was utterly nonplussed.

"Well," said I, "not to keep you in suspense, that queer fellow, as you term him, was none other than Lloyd Farrington in disguise. I knew it when you told me of your meeting him on the ferry, but I was not at liberty to disclose his identity. It became necessary for him to go to Melton, and he assumed the disguise in order that he might avoid the possibility of being recognized."

Guthrie expressed great surprise and was considerably put out by this discovery. "But," said he, "I have such implicit confidence in Lloyd that I know he had sufficient reasons for not making himself known to me." Then, after pausing for a few moments, he continued, "I see it all now. He knew that I was going to Melton to meet Willis in consultation in Mrs. Walton's case. His object in telling me his yarn about his 'gal' was to give me a suggestion. His imaginary 'gal' correctly diagnosed Grace Walton's case. I am satisfied that she knew the secret concerning her husband, of which we have knowledge. Her peculiar illness was the result of mental anguish. Now that Robert Walton is dead, I believe she will recover."

"I certainly hope so," I assented, "particularly on account of her brother, who is less the victim of circumstantial evidence, as we have been saying, than of an heroic disposition to sacrifice himself to save her. It would be Heaven's justice if they can be reunited."

"Then if your plans succeed in regard to Miss Ruth?" said I.

"Say our plans," interrupted Harvey, "for

I am depending upon you for the dramatic arrangements and startling surprises which are so essential to effect the result I am seeking."

His words suggested a new idea to me.

"Did Miss Wardleigh speak of the incident at the ferry-landing," I asked, "when I was with Farrington,—the night you returned from the East?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, "she gave me quite a vivid account of her attempt to warn her 'dream-land hero,' as she called him. You told me about it, but she assumed to give more particulars."

"Relate just what she did say," said I.

"She told me," replied Harvey, "that she saw Lloyd, though she did not mention him by name, of course, and saw a man lurking about with the intention of doing him some harm. She did not pretend to understand, nor did she even mention the fact that her sympathetic powers were so quickened that she seemed to be able to divine the purposes of those she saw.

" 'I was startled,' she said, 'at the sight of a desperate villain who was following him. I knew instinctively that he was pursuing my hero with the intention to murder him. I felt impelled to give him warning. It then seemed

to me that I sought to fix the appearance of the would-be assassin in my mind so that I could describe him. It was not difficult. He had a sanguinary and sinister face. I should know it if I should see it again among thousands. Never shall I forget the dreadful red mark on his cheek.' ”

“ Enough, Harvey!” I exclaimed. “ I see how our plans can be greatly aided by this circumstance,—that is to say, if my suggestion meets your approval. Rolla Clanton is now a prisoner in the hands of the United States marshal, and for the present is subject to my control.”

I then laid my suggestion before Harvey, and he accepted it without hesitation.

CHAPTER XX

THE SOLUTION OF THE WARDLEIGH CASE

"WELL, Farrington," said I, as he entered my office Friday, "I hope that you have been successful."

"You shall judge when you have heard my report," he replied.

"Have you seen Dr. Guthrie since your return?" I asked.

"Yes; I came over early this morning and have just left him. He informed me that he told you the particulars of his visit to Melton. I was afraid that he would be annoyed at my disguising myself from him, but he was not."

I then went over with Farrington all the details of Luke Wardleigh's case. He had succeeded in collecting the proof which explained away the inculpatory circumstances, and to my mind clearly established Wardleigh's innocence. I had had no doubt of it from the hour that Miss Jordan had given her version of the testimony. But my opinion was a mere moral conviction;

Farrington was now able to supply the legal evidence.

The facts relating to the case and to the remarkable miscarriage of justice on the first trial, as I at length understood them, were these :

Luke Wardleigh, who had left the service of Wells, Fargo & Co., paid his twin sister Grace a visit at Melton some four months before his arrest. He found her in very poor health. She appeared to be unaccountably depressed, and at times suffered great agony of mind and body. He was much worried and was unwilling to leave her. He therefore offered to remain and assist Robert Walton, his brother-in-law, in the post-office. Walton accepted his offer, and appointed him assistant postmaster.

About two months after he had taken charge of the office he received an earnest request from one of the division superintendents of the express company, under whom he had served and who had implicit confidence in him, to go to Arizona and straighten out a tangle in one of their offices. Farrington was then in the service of the government, and was at a distant point. Luke consented, and was absent three weeks. While he was away his place was taken by a

schoolmate of his, Abel Willard, a law student, who was a keen, bright fellow. It was during this period of absence that the rifling of letters in the office ceased, as was shown on the trial,—a fact which strongly tended to connect Wardleigh with the crime.

Robert Walton, who bore a good character in Melton and the surrounding country, was nevertheless a man of secret vices. He drank heavily, though he was never intoxicated in public. He had a passion for cards, and often gambled among a few companions who knew his weakness and who profited by it. He was, however, a devoted husband.

Farrington discovered that Walton was deeply embarrassed and, at the time of Luke's arrest, threatened with an attachment for a trifling debt owing to a man in Raymond, thirty miles above Melton, on the railroad. Farrington went to Raymond, and learned that on the day preceding the arrest Walton had run up on the noon train and had made a small payment,—the sum corresponding with the amount which was taken from the letters which had recently been rifled.

Lloyd disclosed his official character to young Willard, and learned from him that on the first

day after he took Wardleigh's place he saw that some one had disturbed the registered letters, for which he had receipted and for which he was responsible. He did not suspect Walton, but feared that some one else might have access to the office, and so kept a keen watch during the whole time he was there, locking the packages in another desk, of which he had the sole key. It is likely that Walton thought that he was suspected and desisted from his thefts.

It will be remembered that the post-office inspectors prepared four decoy letters; that one of them, addressed to Raymond, was mailed on an earlier train than the others. It reached Melton in the morning preceding the day of Wardleigh's arrest, and went to Raymond by the noon train. I did not include this letter in my indictment, supposing that I had sufficient without it. On the trial it was proven that Wardleigh was not in the office during the forenoon, and only returned after the north-bound mail had been made up for the twelve o'clock train. The letter was found at Raymond, by Mr Smithson, one of the inspectors, rifled as all of the others were. It could not have been opened by Luke Wardleigh. It was the discovery of the

facts connected with this decoy letter, on the day after the trial and after my interview with Farrington the night before, that determined my subsequent action.

But the most curious circumstance in the case was the explanation of the finding by the inspectors of a piece of the marked coin which had been enclosed in one of the "test" letters. Kenton had foolishly insisted that the inspectors had dexterously slipped the piece into Luke's pocket while pretending to search him. This reacted against his client,—at least in the mind of the judge.

Farrington's investigations and the witnesses produced by him showed that Walton had purchased a couple of cigars at a stand near by; that later in the day Luke bought cigars at the same place. The dealer, an old German of methodical habits, kept a blotter in which he entered all sales to his customers, whether for credit or cash. This book, which was produced in court, contained in a scrawling hand these entries in pencil: "Mr. Valton 4 cigars, 4 bits —no change." And farther down: "Mr. Vordley 2 cigars, 2 bits; paid 1 dollar, 6 bits change."

Robert Walton, before he died, revived sufficiently to make a confession to Abel Willard, who had taken Luke's place in the office again, and who assisted in removing Walton to his home from the depot when he arrived from Sacramento in a dying condition. Willard reduced this confession to writing; Walton signed it, in a familiar bold hand, and fell back dead. Lloyd took Willard's statement as to the circumstances and swore him to the truth of it.

When Farrington finished his account of what he had learned at Melton, which was frequently interrupted by me as I explained matters not known to him, I said,—

“Certainly the case of circumstantial evidence against Wardleigh, which I declared to be overwhelming and entirely conclusive, is now utterly demolished. Of course I would be justified in dismissing the prosecution at once, but that would not be fair to your friend. He is entitled to be vindicated by a verdict of acquittal. At any rate, I have determined to take that course.” I did not think it best to disclose to Farrington at that time the plan which Dr. Guthrie and I had arranged with reference to Ruth Wardleigh's attendance in court on Monday.

“I presume that Luke will return from Melton on Sunday with Miss Ruth?” I remarked.

“I so understand from Dr. Guthrie,” he replied. “The doctor had a wire from Dr. Willis this morning, saying that she was quite well and that Mrs. Walton was very much better.”

“Speaking of Wardleigh,” said I, “there is much that I do not know in regard to his own connection with his own case, if you will allow the expression. When we prosecute a man for a crime we usually deem it necessary to show—to point out—that he had a motive. But here is an instance where an accused person voluntarily allowed himself to remain under the imputation of having committed a crime, when a word from him would have led to the detection and arrest of the real criminal. What was his motive?”

“I think, Mr. Grafton, that you are entitled to know the whole story before proceeding any further with your plan to vindicate Luke. You will remember that when I saw you in the evening after his conviction, a week ago to-night, I said that I was bound by a sacred promise not to divulge his secret. He has since released me from that promise, and I am free to tell you all.

“When Luke concluded to remain at Melton,” continued Lloyd, “his sister, Mrs. Walton, as I have said, was quite ill. There seemed to be no apparent cause for her ailment. She suffered excruciating pain at times, which finally led the doctor to think that she had cancer of the stomach; but Luke discovered, as he believed, that her trouble was more of the mind than of the body, and that she was distressed in regard to her husband. From some vague remark that she made he was led to suspect that she knew some terrible secret affecting his honor and safety. Still, she told her brother nothing, and he waited, in the mean time attending her with affectionate tenderness. He did not suspect the truth, and had not the slightest suspicion that Robert Walton was a thief until that morning when the inspectors entered the post-office and showed that the registered mail had been rifled. Then it all flashed upon his mind in an instant. He remembered that on one or two occasions he had missed the registered packages, but had thought that Walton had put them in his own desk. Now he saw that they had been taken home by Robert, and that most likely Grace had seen him in the act of tampering with

the letters. In the agony of that moment he formed his plan. The disgrace of Robert Walton would kill his wife, Luke's twin sister. He would save them. The inspectors had committed the mistake of blindly following a suspicion and had arrested the wrong man. But surely the law would not convict an innocent person, and in the mean time attention would be diverted from Robert.

"The inspectors allowed him to see Grace before they left Melton. The interview was heart-rending. He told her that he knew all and that he would save her husband. She threw herself at his feet and begged him to take her life. He succeeded in calming her and in convincing her that he would be acquitted.

"Archibald Kenton was Luke's classmate, and Luke told him everything, charging him sacredly to allow no imputations to rest upon Robert Walton. Kenton was over-sanguine, as most attorneys are.

"I was at Tucson when my uncle telegraphed me of Luke's arrest, assuring me in the despatch, what I did not need assurance of, that he was innocent. As soon as possible I came up. I was greatly embarrassed by my connection with

the department of justice, but upon telegraphing the attorney-general, offering to resign, and giving as my reason that the accused in this case was my friend and that I wished to advise him, I was requested to withdraw my resignation, and was authorized to consider myself relieved of official responsibility in the case of Luke Wardleigh."

It was now noon, and I invited Farrington to lunch with me. We rode up to the rooms of the Bar Association, where I thought that I might meet Judge Tremwick. I wanted to consult him in a matter entirely foreign to the Wardleigh case.

We met the judge and lunched together. Lloyd threw off his melancholy somewhat, and was brilliant in the discussion of a public question of absorbing interest which had just been passed upon by the Supreme Court of the State. He evinced a surprising knowledge of the law involved; so much so that his remarks attracted general attention at the table. Judge Tremwick had introduced him as his nephew. I think that every one present supposed him to be a member of the bar.

After luncheon the judge and I withdrew to

the library, leaving Lloyd to smoke with two or three attorneys of his acquaintance who had been in the law school with him six years before, and who were now rising and prosperous in the profession.

When we had concluded the business on which I had sought him, the judge asked me what I thought of his nephew. I expressed my admiration and affection for him, and remarked that he seemed to display a keen appreciation of the law, and that it was unfortunate that he had not followed his original bent.

"I understand from my sister," said he, "that you have been told the sad circumstances which sent him away from his home and studies. You seem not to know, however, that during all these years he has kept up his legal studies and is, in fact, now a member of the bar."

"You surprise and gratify me exceedingly," I exclaimed.

"Yes," continued the judge, "it is a source of much comfort to me and to his mother. I have supplied him with books when necessary and have directed his reading. Two years ago, being at Prescott, in Arizona, he presented himself before the Supreme Court of the Territory

for examination and passed with credit, as I have been told by one of the judges whom I know."

"He may soon enter into practice at our bar," I said, rather mysteriously. The judge looked at me with surprise, and evidently did not imagine what I meant. I offered no explanation of my remark and we parted.

CHAPTER XXI

THE SEQUEL TO THE TRAGEDY

WHEN the United States District Court opened on Monday, in addition to the full panel of jurors there were present all of the witnesses who had appeared at the first trial of Wardleigh, including Mr. Jordan, his daughter Edith, and one or two others. There were also an unusual number of spectators, and, just before the presiding judge entered, Judge Tremwick came in escorting Mrs. Farrington and Dr. Guthrie with Ruth Wardleigh.

In venturing to describe the interesting, absorbing, and dramatic proceedings which took place on the second trial of Wardleigh I find myself embarrassed; and I may now make the same remark in regard to the account heretofore detailed of the preliminary proceedings and the first trial. The writer of a story finds himself necessarily limited and controlled by existing and recognized forms. It is something the same as in dramatic composition. The require-

ments that there shall be no violent departure from established forms of representation, whatever changes may have occurred in the world beyond the stage, leads to the eternal repetition of scenes which are unlike the realities of life. Not that realism—realistic representation—is the desideratum, for the idealization of nature and of human life should be the aim and end of art. Only this, that art fails when it is not true to the idealized realities of nature and human experience. I must therefore beg those who may read this story to accept my assertion that the court affairs and proceedings which I have described and am about to describe are just as they happened in this case, and as they might happen in that court any day under similar exceptional circumstances. If it does not all seem natural, I can only say that the model of comparison in the reader's mind is at fault.

When Dr. Guthrie and his party came in I had already assumed my place to the right of the bar, near the jury-box. Wardleigh sat at the bar at my left with his attorney, Archibald Kenton. His friends and relatives took seats at a long table immediately behind, though they were near the end in front of which I sat. Lloyd

Farrington was not present, but in my private office across the corridor.

I noticed that Miss Jordan had an expectant and confident look; her eyes were bright and her face flushed. Mrs. Farrington was calm and self-poised, though she cast an anxious glance from time to time towards Luke Wardleigh. Miss Ruth was pale and nervous; she seemed to rely upon Dr. Guthrie, who sat by her side. He occasionally spoke to her, apparently to reassure her.

The judge entered from his chambers and took the bench, the bailiff made proclamation, the clerk called the list of jurors, and then the case of *The United States against Luke Wardleigh*; both sides answered ready. Without any delay we proceeded to select a jury. I stated to the court that by reason of the peculiar circumstances of the case I had agreed with the defendant's counsel to select the same jurors who had been impanelled upon the former trial. The judge expressed some doubt as to the propriety of adopting so unusual a course, but said that since it was by consent he would not interfere. Accordingly, as the jurors were called to the box we mutually excused all who had not

sat on the first trial, until we had thus selected the same twelve. No questions were asked of them and they were not sworn. I thereupon made a succinct opening statement, confining myself to a brief outline of the charges of the indictment. I then proposed to shorten the trial by reading to the jury so much of the evidence of the witnesses for the government who had testified before as I intended to offer. To this Kenton assented, and the judge saw no objection. I then directed the official stenographer to read from his transcribed notes; this he did in a rapid, clear voice. I introduced no testimony, however, except as to the particular charges set forth in the four counts of the indictment. I had gone over the transcript and marked by blue enclosing lines all that I wanted read, so there was no delay. The reading occupied an hour and a half.

Meanwhile, I had an opportunity to more closely observe the interesting assembly. Very little attention was paid to the evidence by any one outside of the jury except by Miss Ruth Wardleigh. She listened, however, with absorbed attention. She alone, of all those present who were interested in her brother, was not in

the secret that these proceedings were a mere form to allow a verdict of acquittal and vindication. She knew nothing of the evidence to be produced which would explain the inculpatory facts. The testimony, as she heard it read, therefore created in her mind a profound anxiety. Dr. Guthrie, who sat where he could study her face, had an intense strained look as he watched her.

I called one of my assistants to my place for a moment and went to my office. Farrington was walking up and down like a caged animal. Guthrie, the night before, had explained to him in full the details of the critical experiment which he was making, with my aid. I assured him that everything was proceeding with precision and regularity and urged him to be calm. I then returned to the court-room.

When the reading of the evidence was concluded, Kenton, who had been told by me of our desire to produce a climax in the defence, said that he would waive an opening statement. He then offered the German cigar dealer, who testified to the entries in his sales book. Kenton stated that his object was to explain the finding of the marked coin in Luke's pocket.

The judge followed the witness closely, cross-examined him a good deal, and became quite excited. He knew nothing of the newly discovered facts.

"Mr. District Attorney," said he, interrupting the proceedings in this way, "if this evidence is to be believed, and I express no opinion, it would seem that you have placed the wrong man on trial. There has apparently been a blunder. Pardon me for asking if you have taken proceedings to cause the arrest of the right person?"

I replied, solemnly, "He has gone, your Honor, to answer for his offence to a higher tribunal."

"Dead?" he inquired, his voice indicating astonishment and a certain reverence.

I heard a sob, and looking around, saw Ruth Wardleigh's face. In its expression there was a mingling of joy and anguish.

The German stepped down from the stand.

"I now offer and propose to read to the jury, with the consent of the district attorney," said Kenton, slowly and deliberately, "the confession of the late Robert Walton, postmaster at Melton, signed by him a moment before his

death. I will produce the witness who reduced the confession to writing at the dictation of the deceased and who saw him sign it."

While Kenton was speaking of Robert Walton's confession I gave a prearranged signal to a deputy marshal who was in attendance; thereupon he left the court-room and returned just as Kenton concluded. He brought in a prisoner, who was none other than Rolla Clanton. I had caused him to be produced for a purpose.

There was nothing irregular or out of the usual in the proceeding; on the contrary, it came about in the ordinary course. A full week had passed since his arrest. The police authorities of the city had turned him over to the marshal at Farrington's suggestion the day that he left for Melton. Before going, Farrington had telegraphed to the United States marshal at Tucson to send a deputy with the necessary papers for the removal of Clanton and his return to the Yuma prison. There was some necessary delay, I suppose, in getting the authenticated documents, and the deputy who was to take Clanton back did not arrive until the end of the week. In the mean time Clanton had been held on a warrant issued by one of the commissioners of

the Circuit Court, as they were then styled, who were the committing magistrates under the Federal system. The necessary complaint to obtain the warrant had been sworn to by one of the deputy marshals of the district who had been a guard at Yuma a year or two before and who knew Clanton. I remember that Farrington was pleased to find that there was some one other than himself who could make oath to the identity of Clanton. He did not want to be detained from his trip to Melton.

Before the court met that day, or just as it met, one of my assistants had conducted the brief examination before the commissioner. Clanton declined to have counsel, and made no effort to defeat or obstruct the course of the law. His identity was established beyond question; an authenticated copy of the record of his conviction and sentence by the court of Arizona, together with the commitment upon which he had been held by the prison authorities at Yuma, were produced by the deputy who had come up from Tucson. The commissioner, accordingly, held the prisoner to be returned to Arizona.

Under the practice it was necessary to obtain

from the judge of the district court an order of removal. Such orders are issued in open court and in the presence of the prisoner, who is produced for that purpose.

It is quite common to interrupt a trial to obtain an order where it is not contested. Therefore, as I say, there was nothing irregular or out of the usual in the production of Clanton in court during the Wardleigh trial. Kenton took his seat and I arose, made an apology to the judge for interrupting the trial, and asked for the necessary order to remove Clanton to Arizona. The judge was annoyed, but upon my explaining that there was no opposition and that the deputy from Arizona desired to make preparations for his departure that day, he directed that the order be drawn and entered; but he said, rather petulantly, that he would not sign the order until recess, or until the conclusion of the pending trial. He was apparently as much interested in the Wardleigh case as Miss Ruth, and about as well informed as to what was going on.

Another incident and one of a very exciting and dramatic character had occurred in the court-room during this brief interruption.

By my direction Clanton was brought to the bar at the extreme left, and farthest away from my seat. Standing there in the close custody of two deputy marshals, for his irons had been removed, his face could be distinctly seen by those who sat with Dr. Guthrie at the long table back of the bar.

When I addressed the court in regard to the Clanton matter, Miss Ruth, thinking that Luke's case was still going on, listened intently. I stood with my back to the jury and facing so that I could see her while I was addressing the judge. I noticed a look of surprise on her face when she understood that I was not talking about the absorbing matter which had brought her there. Like the judge, she too was annoyed at the interruption. As I concluded my request I stepped back and drew quite near Dr. Guthrie and Miss Wardleigh; the judge turned to where the prisoner Clanton stood to see if there was any objection to the order of removal. Quite naturally Miss Ruth followed the eyes of the judge, and looked at Clanton also. The miserable fellow, all bedraggled and redolent of the cell from which he had been taken, was nevertheless defiant and, in a certain indefinable way

that recalled the stories I had heard of his early life, dignified, and even proud in his bearing. The judge, who was a profound student of human nature, looked at him the second time with interest.

I was only concerned now with Ruth Wardleigh. The moment she saw Clanton's face, which showed upon the side towards her the blood-red claw,—the moment she saw him, wrought up as she was, her perceptive powers inordinately quickened, she evidently recognized him. A puzzled and then a startled look swept over her own face. My own senses were unusually keen, and I heard her whisper to Guthrie,—

“Heavens! what is this, Dr. Guthrie? That man is the villain I saw in my dreams. What does it mean? What has he to do with my brother's case?”

“Nothing, Miss Ruth,” replied Harvey; “but if he is indeed the man you saw, he was probably arrested by or at the instance of the one he was pursuing. Perhaps he also is here.” With this Harvey affected to glance around the court-room.

She was startled still more, and seemed to

gasp, though her eyes shone and the color rose to her cheeks as she also glanced about. Evidently Guthrie wished to arouse her expectation to a high pitch, and he said,—

“But as to that, Miss Ruth, wait. All in good time. Remember what I promised you at Melton. Now, however,” he continued, as he saw Kenton about to rise again as Clanton was being taken out, “let us first see your brother Luke vindicated.”

“Yes, yes,” she sighed; but I could see that her mind was bent upon the other subject. She was already convinced of Luke’s absolute innocence; indeed, she had never doubted it.

Kenton arose. “Before the interruption,” said he, “I was about to produce the witness to the confession of Robert Walton, which will be read to the jury. Before doing so I desire first to examine the gentleman from whom I received the confession. He is a special agent of the department of justice, and it was he who furnished the evidence which had just been produced.” He paused, and there was a general look of expectancy in the room. It was the crucial moment. Ruth’s interest in the trial seemed to be suddenly aroused again, and she

looked intently at Kenton. From the expression of her face I was sure she understood every word he uttered.

"Lloyd Farrington, please take the stand," continued Kenton.

I had sent Farrington word by my assistant, and a moment before he had entered and quietly taken a seat without attracting attention.

When Kenton uttered his name Ruth started as if she had received a severe electric shock. A bewildered look swept over her face. She glanced inquiringly and with a half-frightened expression at Mrs. Farrington. I had taken a chair near Guthrie. I remember that I pitied him. He was pale, and his face had a pained and pinched expression from intense anxiety. Farrington stepped forward. As he passed Ruth she could not see his face, and as he walked up to the witness-stand his back was towards her; he stood in that position for a moment, while the clerk administered the oath. Ruth had leaned forward and had grasped with one hand the table at which they sat. Lloyd turned, standing erect. His face was white but he was calm, and even in that absorbing moment I had time to think that he was the handsomest man

I had ever seen. My glance towards him was only for a fraction of a second. I looked at Ruth. There was an expression on her face I had not seen there before. She seemed as if she were awaking.

"Be firm, be calm," I heard Guthrie say in a low, earnest tone.

"Oh, doctor," she whispered, scarcely above her breath, and yet in the intensity of the moment I could hear every word. "It is he, it is he, and I have known him before."

"Yes," he replied in the same tone, but speaking rapidly, "he is Mrs. Farrington's son. You knew him before the death of your parents. You loved him. He was worthy of your love. You forgot him, but he has loved you all these years."

"Yes, doctor, I know now; God forgive me."

"No, it was not your fault, and Lloyd blames you not."

Farrington had taken his seat in the witness-stand. A look from Guthrie assured him. He answered the few questions which Kenton asked him quietly and calmly, explaining his discovery of the cigar dealer's book and his possession of Walton's confession. As he stepped down, and

at a glance from Guthrie, he walked to where they were and took a seat by his mother, who was then between him and Ruth, the doctor being on the other side. I saw Ruth lean over slightly towards Mrs. Farrington and I heard her whisper,—

“Tell him, dear, that I know him,—that I know him to be noble and true; that I remember all.” He heard her, and they exchanged a glance that spoke a world of pent-up love. Ah, what joy transfigured the beautiful face of his mother!

These later events, so absorbing to me and so vitally important to those concerned, passed without attracting much attention in the courtroom. There were some curious glances from the jurors, and the whispering slightly disturbed the judge, so that the bailiff gently rapped the desk with his pencil.

The trial was now soon over. Kenton proved the confession by Willard, read it to the jury, and then rested his defence. We agreed to submit the case upon the charge of the court. His Honor in a few well-chosen words spoke of the fortunate vindication of the accused and directed the jury to acquit. Without leaving the box

they did so. The verdict was entered, the prisoner discharged, and the court adjourned. I bowed to the ladies and withdrew, passing across the corridor to my offices and to my private room.

I was not long left alone. My chief clerk announced, "Judge Tremwick and friends." They entered, and I offered them seats.

"My dear Mr. Grafton," said the judge, with that dignity and self-possession for which he is so noted at the bar, "it is due to ourselves that we should make this formal call, to thank you for your great kindness."

I stammered my appreciation and tried to say something about having merely done my duty, when Lloyd arose and came over to where I stood.

"Pardon me, uncle, and you, Mr. Grafton," said he in his soft, gentle voice, "but there is something more to be said." He paused an instant and they all arose: Ruth stepped to his side. "My friend, Luke Wardleigh, to whom I owe my life, as Mr. Grafton knows, and who is so brave and true, has been honorably acquitted and vindicated, and my uncle is right in thanking our friend in our names. But,

as I say, that is not all. This dear woman, Luke's sister, whom I have loved with my whole soul and life, was living in the seemingly impenetrable shadow of a tragic sorrow; through the science and skill of our friend, Dr. Guthrie, aided by Mr. Grafton, she has been brought back into the light!"

"For which let us thank our Heavenly Father," said Mr. Jordan, in a tone of such deep and thrilling reverence that we all stood in silence for a moment.

"I find my full reward in the approval of Lloyd Farrington," said Dr. Guthrie in his peculiar musical tone.

Then to relieve the strain I turned with an inquiring smile to Miss Edith, and to Luke, who was near her. She blushed, but spoke up bravely,—

"Yes, I confess. And why not? He saved my life also. I knew that he was innocent; I proclaimed it in court and argued it to you."

We all laughed a little, and her father, with a benevolent smile, made a graceful motion with his hands as if to bless them.

"I now understand," said Judge Tremwick, turning to me, "the remark that you made

yesterday at the Bar Association in regard to the possibility of my nephew entering into practice. Let me prove you a prophet. Lloyd,"—he turned to Farrington,—“I offer you a partnership in my professional business. ‘Tremwick & Farrington’ will sound well.” There was a gentle clapping of hands all round. Farrington thanked his uncle and accepted, remarking that it would please his mother; and she said to her brother that he had filled her cup of joy to the brim.

“And I too, dear Lloyd,” exclaimed Ruth, with a world of clinging tenderness in her voice, “am so happy over this fortune. You will no longer be separated from your mother and”—her voice fell a little—“I will not be obliged to follow you in my dreams.”

There was a slight pause and a movement as if to take leave of me, when Lloyd arrested the attention of all for a moment.

“Mr. Grafton,” said he, “I can never forget the glorious splendor of that night in Arizona. I recall the scene when the morning stars paled and the light of dawn appeared. I had just concluded the story of my life, as I termed it. I then thought that the tragedy which I had de-

scribed was the end. You bade me hope, and predicted, as you pointed to the breaking day, that the future had brighter and happier hours in store for me. You were right. I have found them in this Sequel to the Tragedy."

THE END





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